

C 223

PHILOTHEA;

O R,

A Pilgrimage

T O T H E

Holy Chappel of the Cross.

Written Originally in *Spanish*,
by the Most Illustrious and
Reverend *Don Juan of Palafox*
and *Mendoza*, Lord Bishop
of *Osma*.

B O O K I.

*Mibi, absit gloriari nisi in cruce Do-
mini nostri Jesu Christi, ad Gal.6.*

God forbid I shou'd glory in any
thing, but in the Cross of our
Lord Jesus Christ.

L O N D O N,

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LONDON
Printed for the Author.

To the English Catholick
Ladies, Devotes of the
Holy Cross.

LADIES,

THE Piety for which you
are celebrated in For-
eign Countries, has been
the powerful Motive that drew
Philothea from her Native
Spain, to pass into England, and
render you this Visit at your own
Home; and the desire of a more
particular acquaintance, than she
could possibly receive from the
mouth of Fame, has made her in-
A 2 dustrious

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dustrious in learning our English Tongue. Such marks, as these, of curiosity and esteem, are extraordinary in Persons of that Nation; who are bred up in the Opinion, that whatsoever is excellent is enclosed within the large extent of their own Dominions; and 'tis an Honour for which all this Kingdom is indebted to you, who by the Reputation of your Piety have been able to persuade a Spaniard, that this colder Climate is enriched with such a Treasure, of true Christian Zeal, as far surpasses their wealthy Mines of Peru and Mexico. But what effects are impossible to your singular Devotion?

Phi-

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Philothea's Quality is such, as may every where entitle her to have access ; and her Conversation so Agrceable, as will be apt to create a desire of her Company. The recital of her Adventures, (if I may be permitted to use that expression, in a Subject wholly Serious) will instruct, as well as please ; for, tho' it has somewhat the air of a Novel, yet it wants nothing but the Vanity of it, to make it as Diverting. I confess the very thought of a Novel seems profane in a Treatise of this nature ; but if the beginning deceives you into the thoughts of being led into one of those foolish labyrinths ; you'll insensibly lose that opinion,

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and soon be convinced that it is not impossible to treat of the most Holy Things in such a manner, as may render the perusal of them, not less Profitable, because they are Delightful.

Your Conversation will be with a Lady of Quality, Young, Beautiful, of a Great Wit, and admired for all those advantages, of which she is very sensible; perfectly well knowing herself to be the most accomplish'd Person of that Country. But this youthful Pride, and Vanity, had a mixture of some Vertuous Inclinations, which proved to be the Seeds, from whence sprung her future Sanctity. You'll see her strong attachment to the World,

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World, by her struggles against quitting it, and the agony she's in at the very thoughts of a necessity to do so; She argues vigorously in her own behalf, and exerts her utmost skill in reconciling the way to Heaven with her love of the World. And I may almost say, that whilst she pleads her own case with great dexterity, sharpness in her Repartees and Evasions, and serving her self of all such Arguments as may be useful to her purpose, she speaks the thoughts of many others; and makes no bad defence in a cause that is not very good. But, at length, after an obstinate dispute, managed on her side with all the slight, cunning,

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cunning; and address that a youthful passion to the Vanities of this World cou'd inspire into a Soul extremely susceptible of those impressions; she yields to more powerful Reasons. But the accomplishment of this happy Work, is reserv'd for the Second Part, with which she'll entertain you hereafter. In the mean time, I flatter myself with the thoughts, that I shall not have given your devout Sex an occasion to repent the beginning of your acquaintance with this Spanish Devote; and perhaps this first knowledg of her, will not be so disagreeable, nor her humour so unsociable, as to leave you, without having first touch'd your hearts

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hearts with a desire to hear the sequel of her Life, as soon as she can be prepared to give you that satisfaction, after the pains she has taken to entertain you with the beginning of it.

But, if Philothea's Conversation, has the good fortune to be advantageous, as well as delightful to you; I'm well assured that she, in her turn, will be surprisingly charm'd with yours, and find the difficulties of her journey hither, recompensed above her expectation, when she sees that the Fame of your Piety comes infinitely short of what really adorns your Souls; and admiringly beholds that reputation of Sanctity (which
once

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once was the Glory of this Island, above all other Nations, and as Diffusive as your Sex was Numerous) still preserved entire in a small Remnant, and that too buried in obscurity, through the misfortunes of the times; tho' perhaps more vigorous, by its confinement within the narrow limits, to which it has pleas'd the Almighty Hand of God to reduce the small number of those Plants which He has chosen for himself.

Now I've done my part towards the commencement of an Acquaintance between Persons of singular Piety, which I hope will grow into a lasting Friendship, to their mutual satisfaction, and improve-

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provement in that necessary Science which ought to be the constant employment of every Christian. I'll return to my present Work, with this assurance, that, whilst I labour for a second interview, Philothea (who is yet an absolute Stranger) will have gain'd, in this, so much upon your esteem, as to give the continuation of her life, without blushing at her Faults and Imperfections she has so candidly discover'd in the first account of it. The blame of the Language must wholly rest upon the too indiscreet Zeal of the Translator; who, thro' the advantageous opinion he had, many years since, conceived of this Devote, judg'd, that, notwithstanding some imperfections

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fections in our Language, which
Foreiners cann't easily comprehend
the Importance of the Subject (tho'
but passably well deliver'd) wou'd
at once cover those transgressions,
and endear this Lady to your af-
fections, whose conversation has
been highly priz'd by those of
her own Country. The confidence
that it wou'd be no less welcome
here, was the Motive why he pre-
sum'd that, notwithstanding the
many blamishes that may have oc-
curr'd in the manner of deliver-
ing it, yet the uncommon excel-
lency of the Matter would render
it acceptable to those Ladies who
are true Devotes of the Cross,

Your Most Respectful
Humble Servant.

F. H.

PHILOTHEA:

OR,

*A Pilgrimage to the Holy
Chappel of the Cross.*

CHAP. I.

*The Country, Parents, and Sisters of
Philothæa, and her Pilgrimage to the
Holy Temple of the Cross.*

IN one of those Countries inha-
bited by the Race of *Adam* (a
People unhappy through the
Crime of their first Progenitor,
who had entail'd upon them a last-
ing Inheritance of Tears and Mife-
ries) flourished the Ancient City of
Tharfis, famous, not only for its
Greatness and wealthy Commerce
that enriches those Countries; but

B

for

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for its Neatness, and the more than humane Industry with which its Inhabitants, by different ways, labour to find out some Consolation for their common Misfortune; endeavouring to convert the Place of their Banishment into a Native Soil, their Calamity into Delight, and their Punishment and Disgrace into matter of Honour and Reward.

Philomenus (a Person of Quality, and much respected by that Nation, and a Man to whom Fortune had been liberal of Wealth; and Nature very bountiful of the Gifts within her power) lived in this City. His deceased Wife *Dorothea* left him three Female Pledges of their Marriage; who in the flower of their Age, dazzled the Eyes of all the Young Gentlemen of the City with the Lustre of their surprizing Beauty. The Principal of these three charming Beauties, and cause of jealousy in all the fair Ladies of *Tharsis*, was *Pblllothea*: She was Born on the Day when the Church solemnises the Festival of the *Invention of the Holy Croß*:
Her

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Her Wit, Judgment, Prudence, and extraordinary Capacity had always ravish'd her Parents with Joy, Pleasure, and Satisfaction.

The second was call'd *Honorio*, not unsuitably to the propensity of her Nature; which was ambitious of Honours, Grandeur, Riches, and Temporal Felicities: Pride, and vain Appearances had the entire Possession of her Soul.

The third was call'd *Hilaria*; a Name which was a lively representation of her Humour; which was to pass her time merrily, to hate Pains and contrive Ways of entertaining her self agreeably, placing her utmost felicity in the enjoyment of the short-liv'd and brittle Pleasures which this transitory World affords.

The eldest of these three, was, without all dispute, the most celebrated and accomplish'd, (the youngest must not always be the Graces Darling) the dictamens of her Reason were more generous and solid, and her Discourse more witty; in the whole compofure of her Person she was

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their Superior, and her Soul was enrich'd with Inclinations of a *Diviner* Nature. God had given her some Lights to win her to himself, but she either understood not their meaning, or else made resistance. The greenness of her Years, the lustre of Gold and of her own Beauty, the Happiness of her condition, and the Riches to which she was Heiress, had absolute possession of her Heart: To conclude, this otherwise discreet Lady, was exteriorly virtuous enough, but inwardly benighted and deceived.

The Father of these three Ladies used to give them liberty to divert themselves for some days at one of his Country Seats, which was beautify'd with several pleasant Gardens, and was one of the most delightful and agreeable, in all that fair Country: From the Garden Walls, certain pleasing Meadows carelessly stretch'd themselves in such a fashion as open'd a large enamell'd Plain, reaching to the very skirts of a Wood thick set with Poplars, which
Orna-

Chappel of the Cross. 5

extended it self over a huge tract of Land, and was the only place of Ornament and Recreation about that populous City.

It was on the Feast of the *Holy Cross* celebrated in *May*, a season in which the Spring seems to produce Flowers for no other purpose than to crown her self; when these Three fair Sisters, with a small retinue, early in the Morning issued from their Habitation; and after they had passed thro' several Allies belonging to the Gardens, a cross Way (whether permitted, or, as it is natural to Mankind to think any Inclosure an Imprisonment) invited them to quit the Garden for the Fields, which look'd towards the great Wood.

Philothea reflecting on the Festival of the Day, and on her own Name, said to her Sisters, *Honor* and *Hilaria*, that since Time and Devotion invited, it wou'd be very proper for them to go together to pay their Devotions at the Foot of the Cross of *Jesus*, in the Chappel of an Hermitage that stood in the inmost Re-

cesses of that Grove ; the Mystery of which gave that Name and Dedication to the Church : To do this, wou'd render their Recreation, Virtuous, their Weariness, Meritorious, and their Walk, in so pleasant a Season of the Year, an act of Devotion.

To this *Honoria* reply'd, that it mis-beseem'd their Quality to go thither with so slender a Train ; and that it was imprudent, out of a whimsical humour of Devotion, to hazard, if not lose, the credit due to their Quality ; for it might happen that, out of the same devout Fit, there might be a concourse of all the Nobility of *Tharsis*, who wou'd take notice of their slender Equipage, and Carelessness of their Dress ; from which inconsiderate Proposal, and less successful Pilgrimage, nothing wou'd be gain'd but Dishonour, Derision, and Dis-esteem.

Hilaria was of the same mind with *Honoria*, but upon different Motives ; and, to the Fatigue of the Journey, added the trouble of Melancholy and Solitude ; that, since they walk'd
abroad

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abroad for their Recreation, it would be inconvenient to undertake a tiresome Pilgrimage, whence no other Fruit cou'd be gather'd but Sadness, and a disquiet Mind. She did not believe that any wou'd trouble themselves to come from *Tharss*. to that Chappel, the City being furnished with many others, where, with greater Accommodation, they might satisfie the Devotion due to that Day: Nevertheless to make a Journey to that Church wou'd be *laborious* and *painful*, without the least *Pleasure* or *Recreation*.

The discreet *Philothea* re-assumed her Discourse, to perswade her Sisters to bear her Company in her intended Visit to the Holy Chappel of the *Cross*; alledging that their known Quality stood not in need of any greater Pomp than what already attended them; neither ought we to present our selves before the Divine Majesty in his holy Churches with Pride and Vanity, but a devout Humility, and decent Attendance. Nor wou'd the Wearisomness, that so

much terrified *Hilaria*, prove greater in visiting the Cross, than wou'd rise from her beloved Recreation ; if we should tire our selves, dear Sisters, pursued she, with roving about the Fields, how much more advantageous wou'd it be to contract the weariness from a short Journey to the Chappel of the Cross? The same steps will carry us to good and evil, and the only changing our Intentions will but too well recompense the toil, in becoming a remedy for our Offences, by an end full of Merit and Success. What greater advantage can *Hilaria* find in her vain Pastime than in this pious Exercise? If it will cost us Two Thousand Paces to start a satisfaction we shall never be in a steady Possession of ; had we not better pursue that Merit which we shall most assuredly gain, with a much greater Joy and Delight than we now propose? Neither the thoughts of thy Quality which detain thee *Honorio*, nor the imaginary Labour which frightens thee *Hilaria*, ought to retard you when the Vertuousness

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trousness of the Action, and the Authority of your Eldest Sister bid you obey.

The two Sisters, after some other Arguments in their Defence, plainly refused to accompany *Philothea*, saying that they wou'd entertain themselves in the Meadows and Gardens, whilst she with her unseasonable Devotion, perform'd a wearisom and excusable Journey.

But *Philothea* resolv'd not only to persist in what she had undertaken, but (prompted by a higher Power) without staggering in her Resolution, tho' abandon'd by her Sisters, and refused the Attendance of her Domesticks, (none of them being willing to follow her in the way of the Cross) parted from them, bidding them expect her return which wou'd be suddenly; and falling into a Path, which a Country-man told her, led to the Chappel of the Cross, she began her Holy Pilgrimage.

C H A P. II.

*Philothea loses her self in her Journey
and earnestly with Tears, implores
aid of Jesus Christ.*

Philothea follow'd the narrow path, in hopes to find out the Chappel, in which she determin'd to make her Devotions at the foot of the Cross; but not without fearful Apprehensions and sad Inquietudes: The seeing her self forsaken by her Sisters, and even menial Servants, o'rwhelm'd her with sorrow; She was sensibly afflicted at their being so easie to yield to the temptations of *Vanity*, and so refractory to *Virtue*; so prompt to Recreation, and backward to acts of Piety; so active and stirring in the pleasant Fields of Delight, and so heavy and lumpish to take one step in the way to the Cross.

Her imagination represented to her, how not one of the whole Family accompanied her in her little
Jour-

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Journey, how they all stuck close to their Pleasures, unwilling to pass by the way of the Cross, or from what was Delightful to that which was Profitable. To this painful Idea was added another that represented her *alone*, and without comfort, pursuing a dubious way, unattended, and without a *Guide*; this last she wish'd for, to the end she might safely be conducted to the Temple of her Desires: She sigh'd for the other, in regard of the consolation she might receive in her solitude, and mitigation of her Pains.

Turning over these imaginations, and not a little wearied with these disturbances of Mind, she continued her walk with timorous but resolute steps, without quitting her pious intention; when, after the space of a large hour, the path began to grow narrower, and lose it self into another which seem'd to run from one end of the Wood to the other; This rais'd trouble and confusion in her, yet went she straight forward.

She

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She had walk'd a great while, when that narrow path brought her into the middle of the Grove, where was an open piece of ground enclosed on ev'ry side with Trees. *Philothea* tired with her Walk, and the great confusion that environ'd her, seated her self at the root of a Poplar ; and, overcome partly with drowsiness, partly wearied with the restless combat of her thoughts, she fell into a short slumber.

Her troublesome cares neither suffer her to sleep, nor to keep awake : Not to keep awake, because they so oppress her Spirits that they surrender her up to sleep ; nor to sleep, for no sooner begins she to tast some ease in repose, but she's roused by those cares that torment her afflicted Soul. So *Philothea*, within less than a quarter of an hour, wakes from sleep, or, rather amusement : She open'd her Eyes and found her self in that fearful solitude, wall'd within the narrow compass of those Trees, where a Thousand Images of terror hung round about her.

She

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She turn'd about her Eyes to seek
the path which she had quitted, and
found that, as lines run to the center,
so divers paths met from the Wood
in that little spot of ground deck'd
with Flowers, which nature had so
well enclosed: Troubled in mind
she cast her Eyes on all sides, but
without finding any certain issue
from her confused hopes; then turning
her self to Almighty God she
said with all the Ardor of her afflicted
Soul.

"I've been in search, great God,
"of a Cross, and have met one e're
"I reach'd your Temple of the
"Cross. Permit me not I beseech
"you my Lord, permit me not to
"find my ruin on this Festival of
"that Cross, which has been an Instrument
"in the Salvation of Mankind. Behold, my God, the beginning
"of my Journey, and crown
"the end of my desires with success:
"Permit not the sacred remedy of
"our Sins, to prove a mischief to me;
"nor that which is a means of Salvation

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“ vation to others, to occasion an
“ unhappy conclusion of my days.

In this confusion of thoughts, the afflicted *Philothea*, examining all about, as heedfully as her troubled Spirits wou'd permit ; of the many paths, at length made choice of one whose wider entrance seem'd to promise a more favourable issue : And committing her self to its conduct, she travell'd for the space of two hours, searching, not so much for the Hermitage, as an end of that intricate Wood. But that path led her to another open space of ground not much unlike the former. The horror of that gloomy Wood so close cover'd on the top as almost ev'ry where intercepted the sight of Heaven, and so pester'd at the bottom with the thick set Trees and Brambles, render'd all the ways troublesome and dismal.

Then the desolate *Philothea*, finding a strong war in her Breast, between cruel Sighs and Sufferings yielding to the rigour of her Destiny ; lateness of the Day, which was
about

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about to resign its place to the Shades of Night, and to the force of weariness (Heaven and Earth seeming at once, as by conspiracy to fail her; the first posting to another World with all her Comfort, and the other withdrawing it self, refused a passage to her Miseries:) wholly dissolved into Tears, and rowling upon the Grass, with deep Sighs let loose from her sad and afflicted Heart, she-mingled these Words which she sent to the Throne of the Almighty.

“ How comes it to pass, my Lord,
“ that you abandon those who seek
“ you? turn away your Divine Face
“ from those who passionately adore
“ you? suffer those to lose their way
“ who pursue you? and permit in-
“ tentions born of such holy Parents
“ to be so unhappy in their Nativi-
“ ty? I search you, and you forsake
“ me; whilst I am quest of you, I
“ lose my self: and whilst I lost my
“ self you sought after me. You
“ fly from those who seek you, and
“ seek those who fly from you. My
“ Sisters, O my loving *Jesus*, find
the

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“the way to their Pleasures, and
 “must I lose mine in the Devotion
 “that carries me to you? They run
 “no hazard of their Credit whilst
 “they enjoy their Ease; I alone,
 “unfortunate that I am, put my
 “Life and Reputation to the venture
 “whilst I seek the Cross, and find
 “no ease at all.

“What remains for me to do in
 “this solitude, destitute of all reme-
 “dy, like one of its brutish Inhabi-
 “tants? The Sun has almost com-
 “pleated his Days course, and the
 “black Night begins to rob me of
 “the light of Day. Shall I become
 “Food for the Savage Monsters of this
 “Wood, or, wanting sustenance, be
 “a prey to hunger? Chance may
 “direct some Man to find me out,
 “from whom I may suffer the ut-
 “most disgrace. Monsters are less
 “terrible to me than brutish Men,
 “and the danger of my life is no-
 “thing in comparison of the perit
 “of my honour. You, my adored
 “Jesus, unblemish'd Origin of An-
 “gelical and Humane Nature, suc-
 “cor

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"cour me in my Necessity, You, Re-
"lief of the Afflicted, and Consolation
"of the Miserable, look with Eyes of
"Compassion upon my Sufferings.

"But if I'm punish'd with this sad
"Confusion in following your way,
"because I so long neglected it; if
"the various Paths in which foolish
"and inconstant I have vainly wan-
"dered make me not find you now,
"whom I ignorantly forsook; if
"the winding maze of Crosses in
"which I'm entangled, is a lively
"Image of that confused Labyrinth,
"(O how often have my Passions,
"my irregular Desires, and my Ra-
"vings after Pleasures plunged me
"into as deep Calamities, but I was
"not then so sensible of them, in
"regard my Body shared not in the
"Sufferings) then I'm deservedly
"punish'd in seeking you, my God,
"since hitherto I have not sought you
"with Affection: Then indeed it is
"but reason that you conceal your
"self from her who has ungratefully
"endeavour'd to hide her self from
"you. Then you *justly* disarm her
"of

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“ of your Protection who has so
 “ often forsaken you, and return no
 “ answer to her Request, who stopp’d
 “ her Ears to your kind Invita-
 “ tions.

“ But, Alas! my Lord, whether
 “ does the current of my Grief tran-
 “ sport me? Whilst I row against
 “ the Stream of my present Sorrows,
 “ I’m insensibly carried back to the
 “ reflexion of those that are past;
 “ and, as in a Sickness, our restless
 “ Thoughts examine into its Origin,
 “ so my Grief has dived into, and
 “ deplored its Cause: For if I had
 “ not lost you, dearest *Jesus*, in not
 “ attempting to seek you, I shou’d
 “ not at this time have fail’d to find
 “ you whilst I travell’d in your
 “ Search. If I had not lost my self
 “ whilst I fled from the Cross, I had
 “ not err’d in seeking it. O! my Re-
 “ deemer, how far more just it is to
 “ deplore my former loss, than that
 “ which I now endure! For then my
 “ forgetfulness of you lost me, and
 “ now the only comfort which I
 “ have in the midst of my Affli-
 “ ctions,

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“ctions, is the Memory of my dear
“ Lord.

“ O *Jesus* ! have pitty on me, see
“ with what an army of Woes I’m
“ on all sides besieged ; If my
“ Thoughts dive into former Transa-
“ ctions, I’m threatn’d by my Faults ;
“ if they fix themselves on what is
“ present, the weight of my Suffer-
“ ings oppress me : If they glance
“ on what’s to come, the very Ima-
“ gination that my Malady will
“ prove desperate, makes me faint
“ and swoon away. Not only Love
“ but Necessity oblige me to solicit
“ your Divine Aid ; and now I am
“ so much grieved to find my self
“ in this painful Labyrinth which
“ my Plgrimage has brought me
“ into, as at that more dangerous
“ one in which my sinful Life had
“ entangled me.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

*The disconsolate Philothea is succour'd
by the Eternal Wisdom.*

IT was impossible but such passionate Tears and ardent Sighs shou'd be favourably answer'd by that Sovereign Goodness to which she had address'd them, and which gives such attention to the Voice of the distress'd who implore his Mercy.

She had scarce put a stop to her Complaints, when a gentle Breeze, bearing on its Wings Celestial Sweetness, began to move the Leaves, and refresh the tired Limbs of the disconsolate *Philothea* : She felt at the same time a great Alteration in her Soul ; a new Splendour seem'd, not only, to enlighten her Understanding, and bath her Senses with no imaginary Satisfaction, but her Eyes were real Witnesses of a Lustre that display'd its Rays throughout that vacant spot of Ground from the now fortunate Grove ; so that the Horrors of her
Mind

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Mind vanish'd, as the Darkneſs of the Place yielded to the New-born Light, and the Obſcureneſs of the Solitude became ſuddenly full of Divine Rays.

This unexpected change of the late diſmal Scene, extremely ſurprized *Philothea*, and to her greater Amazement, all the Trees of the Wood ſeem'd to bow down, and ſoon after to diſappear at the Preſence of that Divine Power which came to honour that happy Place: Seeing her ſelf environ'd with ſo much Splendour, ſhe turn'd her Face towards one part of the *Cirque*, where ſhe beheld a handſom Perſonage, the ſource of that diſplay'd Light, reſting on a *Croſs* which he bore in One Hand, and holding a *Crown* in the Other. At firſt ſhe was not a little terrify'd at an Object every way ſurprizing; but, ſummoning all her Courage to her Aid, ſhe ſoon recover'd ſtrength enough to be able to liſten, without much diſturbance, to theſe words of that amiable Viſitant.

Ceafe

Cease, *Philothea*, said He, cease to be any longer disquieted; I have heard thy Complaints, I am the Eternal Wisdom, and Unoriginized Source of all Goodness; *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*; I am he who never conceal my self from those who seek me; and he who always reaches his assisting Hand to the Neceffitous; I am he who favours those who seek my Cross, and who directs, counsels, and puts them in the way. Thy Request was acceptable, in regard that it not only was to be rid of thy present Sufferings; but to be disengaged from thy Sins.

Thou cou'dst not possibly have made choice of a more proper means to allèviate thy Afflictions, than that of repairing the Transgressions of thy Life past; nor taken a more effectual Course to cashier thy Sorrows which overwhelmed thee whilst thou lost thy way to the Cross, than by thy enquiring after the true way to save thy Soul, by lamenting thy Errors, and solliciting thy Amendment.

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This is what I spake by my Prophet ;
Put your self in the right way, make enquiry after the ancient paths, try which is the best, and having found it out, follow it, and your Souls shall find refreshment. For this reason, beholding thy Tears, Desires, and Affections, I stooped the Heavens, and inclined my self to instruct thee in the Way of Salvation, and Eternal Life.

Philothea was very glad to hear such kind Expressions and encouraged by them, with profound Humility reply'd : *What is man, that you, my Lord, are mindful of him? And who am I, to merit that the eternal Son of the Living God shou'd debase himself so much as to stoop to me.*

My coming to thee, *Philothea*, said the Eternal Wisdom, is a great Grace and Favour, without which you neither are, nor can do any thing ; without my Assistance you must always remain a Prisoner to your Sins. All the good you have or are capable of springs from, and centers in me ; and your present Disposition to attain

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attain this Good, streams from me its Source and Fountain. *My delight, Philothea, is to be with the Sons of men*; and this Delight, this Love moves me to incline my self to thy Aid.

This Love is the Fountain whence all your Succour flows; if I had not heal'd the wounded Traveller to *Ferico*, if my Hands had not search'd his Wounds, if I had not left Money to supply his Necessities, and if I had not receiv'd him into my Protection, where wou'd that unfortunate Passenger, rather dead than wounded, have found a Remedy? My Voice rais'd *Lazarus* from the Grave; my Voice restored to Life the deceased Son of the Widow of *Naim*; my Hand rescued the Daughter of disconsolate *Fairus* from the Chains of Death: Without this Voice, and without this Hand none can rise from Sin, none can be heal'd, none revived.

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C H A P. IV.

*Our Saviour instructs Philothea in the
Way of the Cross.*

LET the Heavens, my Lord, for ever extol thy Mercy, said *Philothea*, that has vouchsafed to be mindful of your humble Slave: Be you always bless'd who heard my Petition, and bent your divine Attention to my Complaints.

And since you are the Eternal Wisdom, Light, and Pilot of our Souls, guide me thro' the Ways of safety, not in this Material Course I held, but in the Eternal one of my Soul.

Lose me in the World, and to the World for my self, but lose me not dearest *Jesus*, in the World to *You*. Lose me to what is Temporal, but not to what's Eternal. You have bow'd your self down from Heaven to Earth for my Instruction, and descended from your Eternal Throne, to this your Footstool, for my Re-

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demption ; as you perfected the last by the effusion of your precious Blood, and an ignominious Death, perfect with your holy Lessons the Reparation of my Life: Shew me, O Eternal Path, your Way, point me out, Eternal Verity, your Truth, dictate to me, O 'Life Eternal, how to steer this Bark through the tempestuous Seas of Mortality, into the Haven of Salvation, and Everlasting Life.

Hearken, Child, answered our Saviour, and incline thine Ears to my Voice ; I have stoop'd Heaven and my self to your Moans, listen to the Words of Eternal Life, you who are in search of it : First give me your Attention, that with it I may have Possession of your Heart. Have you a desire, *Philothea*, to view the *Path* which you covet, and mount above this Country of Banishment in which you suffer ? Wou'd you be brought within the Prospect of the Place through which you must pass from Combat to Victory, and from Victory to Triumph.

Yes,

Chappel of the Cross. 27

Yes, my Lord, reply'd She, if you please, I wou'd see it. Turn then your Eyes, said the Almighty, to the right Hand of that Hill, and you shall behold the Path leading to Eternal Happiness.

She turn'd her Sight to that side of the Hill pointed at by our Saviour, and saw a high Mountain, about which were many steep and craggy Places; She ey'd it on all sides, and perceived that by diverse narrow Paths, very many Persons, Men, Women, Youths, Damsels, Bishops, Priests, Religious, Married, Virgins, the Continent, Kings, Princes, Magistrates, and People of all Nations, each bearing the Cognizance of his Condition, labour'd to climb up: But they were all in extream Poverty, Beggary, and Nakedness; sometimes they supported intolerable Heats, and sometimes excessive cold. Others were seen to throw away Riches, Scepters, Crowns, Dignities, as Obstacles to their Ascent; others went bare-foot, that like *Moses* they might tread with

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Reverence on the sacred Earth of holy Mount Oreb.

Every one of them carry'd a Cross on his Shoulders, some were ponderous, others of a moderate Weightiness, and others Light. Their ascent was accompanied with Sighs, Sobs, and Tears ; one while lifting up their Eyes to Heaven, another while letting them fall upon the Ground : Hope rais'd them upward, and a certain Disconfidence in themselves, accompany'd with a humble Knowledg of their own Weakness and Frailty, depress'd them to the Earth.

They pursued their Way, buried in a profound Silence, and put themselves into different Paths, insomuch as hardly any one bore Resemblance with another ; for tho' one might observe that many were of the same Profession, yet they walk'd in distinct Paths. In all that Mountain *Philothea* saw no subject of Mirth or Comfort, but matter enough to feed Grief and Sadness. She beheld Crosses, Pennances, Sweat, Blood, and Mortification.

Chappel of the Cross. 29

tifications ; not Flowers, Fruits, Recreations, Cool Shades, or Chrystal Fountains. All was craggy, uneasie, and toilsom : Points of Rocks sticking out were almost infinite ; Multitudes of Brambles and Thorn-Bushes, pester'd the Ascendents, the Steepness was terrifying ; and lastly, the Multitudes of Precipices render'd the whole Aspect of the Mountain formidable, and every step dangerous.

Philotheca observed a thing truly remarkable, that those who carried great Crosses, and seem'd unable to sustain themselves with that weight on their Shoulders, nevertheless help'd their Followers who bare lesser Crosses : And those who were *cloath'd*, complain'd more of cold than those who were *naked* ; they mutually assisted each other with Demonstrations of great Love and Charity ; and, if any one let fall his Cross, his Companion reach'd it to him, and put it again on his Shoulders ; for without this they had not strength enough to master the steepness of

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the way. The foremost animated those who were behind, with their Voice as well as their Example; and with this Encouragement they roused themselves to a valiant and vigorous continuance.

She also took notice that they who went *barefoot*, trod more sure and firm in the *hard* way, and on *Thorns* and *Brambles*, than those who wore *Shoes*; and those who suffer'd most, pass'd over the craggy Steep with much more Joy and Content: So that their Delight and inward Pleasure encreas'd proportionably to the greatness of their Labour, and weight of their Cross: And, on the contrary, the *less* the Crosses were which they carried, the *slower* was their pace, and *greater* the Pains and Trouble with which they overcame the Ruggedness of the Way.

The Crosses which they carried were of fundry Materials, some of Wood, some of Lead, Iron or other Mettals; nevertheless they were valu'd according to their *Weight* or *Cbearfulness* of the Bearers: Not according

Chappel of the Cross. 31

according to their Workmanship or Materials. *In fine*, every one walk'd along supporting his Cross, without casting an Eye backward; they look'd only upon one another, and with Humility, Silence, and Charity, gave mutual Strength and Courage to their Fellow Travellers.

C H A P. V.

Philothea is astonish'd at the sight of the Path, and Hill that was shewn her, and refuses to walk in it.

P*hilothea* remain'd wonder-struck at what she beheld; wherefore, she being naturally of a delicate Constitution, accustomed to *Regales* and Pleasures, seeing a Path so rugged, could not forbear saying with great concern.

Is it possible, my Lord, that there shou'd be no other way to follow you than this which you present to my Eyes? How shall we feeble ones be able to travel, and we Sinners to

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find you out ? How will he bear your Cross who has known it no other ways than *by Name* ? And how will he sustain it who knows not how to support it ? Have you reserved no other way, my *Jesus*, less terrible and frightful by which we may be conducted to you ? Can it be possible that you shou'd place so many Difficulties in following you, and so many Pains and Torments e'er you can be found.

Place rather, my *Jesus*, Pains, Sufferings, Crosses, Rigours, and Difficulties in *forsaking* you ; and Sweetness, Pleasure, and Ease in following you. He who abandons you deserves to be punish'd, then load not him with Pains who searches after you. Woe is me ; alas ! how shall I get strength enough to walk in so craggy a way ? And a Thousand times Woe to me if I do not follow you, and refuse to pay you my Adorations ! To what, alas ! am I reduced, who have neither Courage to follow you, nor Will to leave you ?

And

Chappel of the Cross. 33

And dost thou not, said our *Saviour*, make hast to adore the *Cross*? Yes, my Lord, reply'd She, but to adore, and carry it is not the same thing; I wou'd have it respected, but to lay it on my Shoulders terrifies me; I desire nothing more than to render it due Homage, and nothing less than to suffer by it; I run to it, but tremble to go with it.

Be not afflicted, *Philothea*, said our *Saviour*, Pleasure lies inclos'd within that Pain, and under the appearance of Sighs, Tears and Labour, is conceal'd Delight. Thou consider'st them by what thy corporeal Eyes represent to thy weak Imagination: If in this occasion thou madest use of those Virtues with which thy Soul's endued, the frightful Ideas which fill thy fancy wou'd either lessen, or totally disappear. Thou beholdest the Mount of Eternal Life, and Way to Glory, thro' a false and deceitful Prospective; for otherwise wou'd it appear if the *Medium* were true, and not *deceitful*: Believe me, Child, that this way which I made

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choice of was absolutely necessary for thy good, and Redress of thy Miseries ; the Passengers wou'd be *fewer*, and their Encouragements *less*, if they took *another* way than what I mark'd out, with my Voice, Doctrine, and Example.

Well then, reply'd *Philothea*, since you, my Lord, vouchsafed to descend from Heaven to Earth for no other end but to carry Souls from Earth to Heaven ; if this was the mark at which all your Mysteries from the Manger to the Cross levell'd ; if in this Journey our Nature encounters so much difficulty, and for this respect its Passengers are very *few*, if compared with the glorious Captives to their own Appetites : Cou'd not you beat another Path, in which to follow, love and serve you, more sweet, easie and delightful, than that of the Cross, which is so painful, laborious, and unpleasing ? Wou'd it not be better to follow you in the height of Pleasures, Recreations, Delights, Riches, and an undisturb'd Tranquility, by which means the
num-

Chappel of the Cross. 35

number of your Followers wou'd be infinite, and your School abound with Disciples?

O *Philothea*, return'd our *Saviour*, how deludedly and blindly thou discoursest? These are not the words of Life, but *poysonous* and *killing*. They are dictates of *Corrupt Nature*, not of *my Father*; of *Passion*, not *Reason*; of *Sensuality*, not of the *Holy Spirit* and *my Grace*. How manifest is it that thou disrelishest me, and thy vitiated Palate is pleased with the tast of thy foolish and vain Recreations and Delights? Thou hast ignorantly pursued Vanity, Darkness and Falshood; which is the reason why thy discourse is ignorant, and not agreeable to Truth. It is therefore necessary, *Philothea*, for thy better Instruction, that I begin my Discourse from the first Rudiments, and enlighten thy Understanding with the most early Rays and Principles of my Doctrine, to the end thy vanquish'd Understanding may readily yield to follow me.

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Consider not my Ignorance, O God, said *Philothea*, but rather enlighten the Darkness that involves me ; if I have talk'd like those of my Sex, who have not beheld the Light of your Divine Truth, but walk'd in the obscure Shades of their own Ignorance ; shine upon me I beseech you who are the Son of Eternal Light, and guide my Steps you who are the *Way* and *Verity* it self.

C H A P. VI.

Our Saviour instructs Philothea in the way of the Cross, and answers her difficulties.

I Am glad, *Philothea*, said our Saviour, at this Proposal of thy Difficulties ; for only I, and those who are enlighten'd by me, can teach thee true Wisdom : All besides is Vanity and Imposture.

Know then, Child, that from the time your first Parents eat the forbidden fruit (the nature of which was extremely nourishing) they felt a disorder in themselves of which they

Chappel of the Cross. 37

they never had been sensible before, of which their Reason was no longer Mistress, and of which no length of time will ever be able to cure their Posterity. This Change of their bodily Constitution, weaken'd their Original Love of Heaven, and the Soul with difficulty rais'd it self to the Contemplation of its Chief Good; which in effect was to shut Heaven against them, and, at the same time, open the Gates of Hell to all Mankind as well as to it self: For from this Root sprung all the Ills of which *Adam's* Posterity has since been Guilty, which soon appear'd in the saddest effects; all Flesh growing daily more, and more corrupt; losing it self in the enjoyment of earthly Pleasures: For *ev'ry one*, as the Prophet said, *went astray, and pursued the way of Perdition.* Man, in fine, was become *Slave* to the Flesh, to his Appetite, and to his several Passions; some few Souls excepted, which the power of my Grace preserved from the common calamity of Mankind: The number of which
select

select Plants, in respect of the rest, made but a slender line, drawn from *Adam* to *Noah*, from *Noah* to *Abraham*, from him to *Moses*, from *Moses* to *David*, and from *David* to my Self, who became Man for the Salvation of Men. At which time there hardly remain'd in the World either, Truth, Righteousness, or Justice; and what did so, was only to be found amongst a few observers of my Law.

Beholding this universal Shipwreck of my Creatures, notwithstanding the care I had taken for their Preservation; and seeing the Original disorder of the Flesh had produced the most cruel consequences, to which nothing but my *Incarnation* cou'd apply a remedy; I assumed Humane Nature, was Born into the World, and pass'd my Infancy and Youth in subjection to my Parents. When I was arrived at an Age that was proper to instruct the World, I enter'd upon the Business for which I was made Man; and preach'd Salvation to the *Jews*, setting forth the
many

Chappel of the Cross. 39

many Errors they embraced ; teaching them what they ought to do to gain Heaven ; reproving their Vices, and working Miracles in Testimony and Confirmation of my Doctrine : and to manifest that I was the *Messias*, their *Deliverer*, and their GOD become Man for their sakes, and their Eternal Good, to which my unlimited Bounty, and the Mercy I had upon their deplorable Condition carried me. As a further proof of my Love, and the Truth of what I preach'd, I suffer'd inexpressible torments, and, at last, the most ignominious Death of the Cross. The Sins of Men were of such a Nature that nothing less then what I underwent, cou'd save the World from everlasting ruin ; and such was my Goodness and Tendernefs for my ungrateful People, as to submit myself to all sorts of injuries, to the end I might personally converse with them, shew them the Errors in which they were involved ; and lay the Riches of Heaven open to them : Making a way to their Possession
which

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which shou'd be *New, Just, Reasonable, Holy, Agreeable, Pleasant, and Easy*; by which, not only the *Jews*, but all Nations, might acquire Salvation, and without which they wou'd plunge themselves into inevitable, and Everlasting Misery.

I confess, my Lord, said *Philothea*, that your Mercy infinitely exceeds my Iniquity; I confess it with the utmost Confusion for my many Sins, but with Joy that I have so merciful a God. But pray, my Lord, explain to me the several qualities of the *Way* you speak of, which yet I do not comprehend.

The way to Heaven, *Philothea*, reply'd our *Saviour*, which I came to establish in the World was *New*, for it was no longer veil'd under the obscurity of Types and Figures; nor burthen'd with the hardships of a difficult and severe *Law*, which was absolutely necessary for the breeding up a head-strong, and stubborn People in the Knowledge and Adoration of the true God: neither is it any longer confined to a Nation
planted

Chappel of the Cross. 41

planted in a *narrow corner* of the World, but laid open to *all Mankind* under the most alluring forms that is possible to prevail with Humane Nature.

It is *Just* also, in being proportion'd to the several exigences of the frailty, to which Man is subject through the Corruptness of his Nature ; which (being lost in the darkness of Sin and Ignorance, and by that means fall'n into the grossest Errors which led to eternal ruin) required a proper remedy for those Evils which had brought it to a most deplorable condition. The *Jews*, my Favourite, but ungrateful, People, whom I had a Thousand ways obliged to love me above all other things ; forgot the Care, Mercy, and Tendernefs which I had ever shewn them. They were grown deaf to the advice of Angels, they persecuted, and stoned the Prophets whom I sent amongst them, neglected the Law I gave them ; and carried away with the stream of their unbridled Passions, became *Slaves* to
Sin,

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Sin, and consequently, to the *Devil*. Nothing cou'd rescue them from this wretched State, but the presence of *God*; and in such a manner, as he might become a *Visible Object* of their Adoration. I therefore, descended from Heaven, was made Man, and came in the quality of a Friend, full of Goodness, Mercy, and Compassion; that I might engage them to me by fresh Obligations and repeated Favours. The root of their malady being a *Misplaced Affection*, my care and endeavour was to undeceive them, which I did by a familiar Conversation with them; laying hold of all occasions to let them see that the World did not deserve their affections because it must one day perish; but that the Pleasures and Glory of Heaven were of inestimable Value, and wou'd endure *for ever*: That they wou'd survive the destruction of the World and of their own Bodies, and rise from Death to the enjoyment of everlasting Happiness if they loved me in this life by following my Doctrine;

Chappel of the Cross. 43

ctrine ; but to Eternal Pains if they adhered to their sinful Courses, and set their hearts on this World ; the Vanities and Pleasures of which I taught them to despise by my Example as well as Precept. I heal'd their Infirmities to win a return of Love from them ; I wrought Miracles to authorize my Actions and Doctrine ; I bid them to fear less the Death of the *Body*, then of the *Soul* ; and encouraged them to lay aside all apprehensions of Death (if accompany'd with a well disposed Mind) by that which I suffer'd for their sakes.

And to the end they should not doubt of a Resurrection, I my self rose from Death ; and, during the space of Forty Days after, conversed with them, as formerly, explaining the Scriptures ; and, when I had given my last Instructions, I ascended to Heaven in their sight. But tho' I left the World, I did not abandon the conduct of it ; for my *Holy Spirit* visibly descended upon my Apostles whom I had appointed to succeed me in preaching the Gospel to

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to all Nations, and to establish a Church with which my holy Spirit was to remain until the Consummation of Ages. This, *Philothea*, was the Method I took to rescue the World from its slavish State, and to lay Heaven open to all Mankind; and by leaving, with my Church, Remedies proportion'd to the many Infirmities incident to the Weakness of humane Nature, the way of Heaven is also shewn to be *just* and *appropriate* to the Attainment of that Glorious End.

And it cannot be *Just*, without being *Reasonable* at the same time; for no Action can be *Just*, that is not also *Reasonable*: And, since Heaven is the greatest Good that Man can possibly have, 'tis highly reasonable that he shou'd chuse it preferrably to all other things. No Man wou'd be esteem'd Wise, nor to act according to Reason, if he shou'd not prefer what was in ev'ry respect most to his Advantage before a trivial Benefit. This is the way I chalk'd out to Happiness, and the whole Business of my

Chappel of the Cross. 45

my Life on Earth was to perswade Men (deluded with the various trifling Pleasures of the World) to act like *Men*, that is agreeably to *Unprejudiced Reason*; to chuse wisely in this World, and prefer their greatest and only Good to whatsoever this World contain'd. I often assur'd them that God alone was their *supreme Good* and essential Happiness, that he loved them tenderly, and, to manifest his Love, had sent his only Son to be their Companion on Earth, and instruct them in the way to Beatitude; the Miracles I wrought, demonstrated that I was the *Son of God*, their Friend, Benefactor, and Redeemer; which I manifested by all the most endearing Expressions, and by a Thousand Actions full of the sincerest Love, and unfeign'd Affection that was possible for God to give, or Man to receive. Having made it evident that I was *God* as well as *Man*, and that I came on purpose to do them the utmost Service of a Friend; it also appeared most plainly, that by loving me (*Me* who had given

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given such undoubted Proofs of real Kindness, to the degree of a most Passionate Fondness) they wou'd at the same time love their *Greatest Good*, and utmost Felicity. I appeal to you *Philothea*, nay, I appeal to all Mankind, ingrateful as it is, to determine whether the Way to Heaven is not *Reasonable* as well as *Just*.

And besides both these, it is also *Holy*; for the way to Heaven is *Perfect Charity*: The Love of God above all things, and of your Neighbour as your self, is the fulfilling my Law, and is the *Epitome* of all Vertues. Believe, *Philothea*, what my Apostle has most truly told you; Cor. I. c. 13. v. 14. *Charity is patient and courteous, Charity is not envious, does no uncomely thing, is not puff'd up, is not ambitious, is not solicitous for its own, is not provoked to Anger; thinks not any harm, rejoyceth not at Iniquity, but is joyful at Truth: Charity suffers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.* Consider now, *Philothea*, the different ways of Men before my coming into the World,
and

Chappel of the Cross. 47

and reflect how the Venome of Original Sin had diffused it self through all the Branches of *Adam's* Posterity, by which the Flesh with its *Colleague* the Appetite, having gain'd an absolute Ascendent and Mastery over Reason, had broken down all the Bars and Fences of Natures Law, in chace of the most abhorr'd Pleasures and Delights. *Ambition* scrupled not to advance its unbounded Interests upon the Ruines of *Justice*, and drive the Wheels of its merciless Chariot over the Neck of Moderation: *Pride*, without remorse, insolently trampled on Humility, to acquire for itself a Glorious, but *Empty Name*. *Luxury* with her brutish and debauch'd train, made use of Flatteries, Threats, Treacheries, and Artifice, to circumvent *Modesty*, *Shame*, and *Chastity*: And *Avarice*, boldly intrenching upon its Neighbours Territories, ravaged all before it, pillaging every where without demurring upon right or wrong, lawful or unlawful. *These* and much worse than I have represented, were
the

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the ways of Men ; to *these* they erected Altars, *these* were the Deities they adored at the time when I descended upon Earth to restore lost Reason to its Empire ; to preach Humility, Poverty in Spirit, Temperance, Continency, Patience, Charity to each other ; *In fine*, to establish a way to Heaven full of Piety, Virtue, and Holiness.

C H A P. VII.

Philothea interposes her Objection, and Fear to go in the way of the Cross ; our Saviour answers them, and animates her, by shewing the Pleasantness and Agreeableness of the Way.

GREAT was the Consolation that *Philothea* received from what our Saviour said, and was extreamly satisfy'd with the evidence of his Discourse ; but she cou'd not remove the fearful Apprehensions rais'd in her, at the sight of so many Crosses, Pains, and Displeasures, which were
the

Chappel of the Cross. 49

the sad Ornaments of that dreadful Hill, pointed at by our Saviour as the *Way to Glory*. These Ideas painted in her Imagination in their most lively Colours, struck her with such Fear, Horror, and Amazement, as made her yield to their awful Tyranny; tho' she was perfectly convinced with the Evidence of our Saviours Discourse. She acknowledged the way to be *New, Just, Reasonable, and Holy*; but, immediately reflecting that he had also told her it was agreeable, pleasant, and easie, from whence she thought to derive some Relief; she address'd her self to him in these terms.

I confess, O Eternal Welfare of happy Souls, that mine is fully and entirely satisfy'd that your *Way* is *Just, Reasonable and Holy*; I acknowledge the future Advantage which attends those who follow you with their Cross: Now, I comprehend that the Cross is the *Rod of Divine Justice*, which with its sacred Awe disturbs the dissolute and unlawful Pleasures of our Life; I see that

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Justice

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Justice is the *Scepter of Reason*, and, as it were, a Badge of her Authority; that it is the Rule by which all that is Good and Evil is measur'd; that which makes Men live within the Bounds of Reason, and is that Power which determines the happy or unhappy State of Souls to all Eternity. But to this Path (*Just, Holy, and Reasonable* as it is) I beseech you, my Lord, annex *Facility*. Grant that what is *profitable* may be also *easy*, that what is *holy* may be also *delightful*, and that it may be *agreeable* as well as *reasonable*. Yet how shall I perswade my self, that to suffer Punishment is to enjoy Tranquillity? Must I believe that *Toil* and *Labour* is not *tiresome*, and that *Penance* in *Sweat* and *Blood*, is not an *Affliction*? I see those, who under the Burthen of the Cross applying their utmost Endeavours to overcome the Steepness of that Hill, do strain themselves till their Sinews almost crack; I see them travel in the midst of Pains, Sighs, Tears, Blood and Grief; and shall I call this a *pleasant* and an *easy* way? That it is, *Just, Holy, and Reasonable*.

Chappel of the Cross. 51

senable, I can grant it; but *Agreeable*,
Easie, and *Pleasant*, I cannot.

And if it is not *Easie*, what remains, my God, for me to do, who am weak, feeble, and of a Constitution nice, and delicate? How shall I be able to walk in Pain and Torment, in a difficult as well as an unfrequented way? How is it possible for those to travel under the weight of a Cross, who have had no acquaintance with it? What imports the *Holy* which I wou'd embrace with Joy, and the *Iust*, which I ought to practice, if I am destitute of sufficient *Strength*, and (what wou'd render the Enterprize practicable,) if I see the way void of what is *pleasing* and *easie*? The Cross will turn to my greater Punishment and Confusion, if my Hopes are not flatter'd with some sensible good. I shall see the good and not pursue it, because the pursuit of it is so difficult: I see and know the advantage that attends it, but I want Power to undergo the Rigours and Hardships of it. Facilitate, O my Lord, that which is *Holy*, temper what is *Reasonable*,

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with what's *Agreeable*, and sweeten
what's *Reasonable*, *Fast*, and *Holy*.

O Progeny of *Adam* (creep'd our
Saviour) of a perverse, stubborn and
putrify'd Heart! Your Affections
are always bent to depraved and si-
mister things; you pass by what is
Reasonable, to run into the Embraces
of *Pleasure*, and turn your Backs
upon what is *Holy*, to indulge your
Ease: You avoid my Ways to pursue
your own, which are rather Precipices
than Paths.

Who inform'd you, *Philothea*, that,
notwithstanding the difficulty there
is to follow me, and continue in my
Service, that you cou'd not enter-
prise, and vanquish all its Difficul-
ties? Or, why shou'd not the Pos-
session of an Eternal Crown of Glo-
ry be bought with difficulty? Shou'd
I give Heaven gratis, when you buy
Earth with all its Pleasures at so dear
a rate? Or, peradventure, is the E-
ternal Possession of *Me*, less valuable
than your momentary fruition of wi-
thering Delights, and decaying Plea-
sures? Heaven you'd have for nothing,
and

Chappel of the Cross. 53

and pay dearly for Earth! To attain a Temporal Good you support innumerable Pains, Jealousies, Afflictions, Persecutions, Affronts, Hazards and Difficulties; but you'd suffer nothing to acquire an unconfined Happiness. What Madness, *Philothea*, is this? So much Spirit and Courage, or rather Fool-hardiness to plunge yourselves into the hellish Abyis of racking Torments, for one delight which you can hardly say that you've enjoy'd it, so short-lived it is; for a place of Honour, whose Possession you can scarce say you've attain'd, ere it irrecoverably disappears, and is vanish'd; and so much Cowardise, so much Faint-heartedness to attain Eternal Glory? What a blind Rashness is it to lay your Backs under so heavy a load of Afflictions as you suffer, to condemn your selves for ever, and refuse to undergo less weighty Afflictions, that wou'd lead to Salvation? Should I exact Suffering at your Hands, without affording any Help or Consolation, and Griefs without granting any Respite

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or

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or Ease, and in the end crown you with everlasting Glory, had I not not given it at a *cheap Rate*? And, perhaps, does not Eternity merit a short-lived Suffering? And does not the immense value of Everlasting Glory out-balance Light and Inconsiderable Sufferings? Do you think it a more advantageous Bargain to enjoy the perishable and fading Pleasures of this transitory World, at the expence of so much Labour, which will never be counter-balance'd by Delights, whose short Lease expired, the Date of Endless Torments must begin?

C H A P. VIII.

Philothea afflicts her self, dreading our Saviours Anger. He comforts, and instructs her in the way of the Cross.

P*Philothea*, apprehended, from the Energy and Vigour with which these Words were utter'd, that Christ was angry, that his Kindness

Chappel of the Cross. 55

ness was turn'd to Severity, and his Affability into Rigour ; and thus reply'd.

It is most evident, my Lord, said she, with great Sorrow and Humility, that I have discoursed not only like a frail Woman, but like Frailty itself. 'Tis true, my adored *Jesus*, we are foolish, and blind ; but, since we are not able, with this Weakness to advance towards you, vouchsafe to strengthen us with your Omnipotence ; and, since it is impossible for us, without your Aid, to imitate your Example, fortifie our Weakness with your All-strengthening Grace. The Prophet contracted himself into the littleness of a Child, and by that means the Child was restored to Life.

What you have said, my Eternal Sovereign, is most true ; yet, if I may be permitted freely to disclose my Thoughts, your whole Proof evinces that it is most equitable to suffer here, in your pursuit, since Eternal Glory is the Reward : But not that we shall attain you without Suffer-

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ring, nor, that it is easie to follow you in Pain, or that we do it with Delight. So that you, my Lord, manifest the *Justice* of the way, but leave the *Pleasure* and *Agreeableness* of it untouch'd. You prove that Justice obliges us to vanquish Difficulties, but do not shew the *easiness* in doing it. I see, my Lord, that it is *just* we shou'd endure hardships in our Search and endeavours to enjoy so inestimable a Good, and that whatever Afflictions are undergone by the Saints in this Life, by Sinners in their wicked Courses, and by imperfect Souls separated from the Body, are slight and inconsiderable in respect of Heaven, of which, through your Goodness, our Sufferings for Virtue are the happy prize.

But I my Lord, feeble I, and destitute of Vertue; by what Industry shall I heap so painful and laborious a Summ together, as must be the price of everlasting Happiness, since I find my self unable to support the least Pain? Appoint me a way, my Lord and God, that is tolerable to me

Chappel of the Cross. 87

me. I love, I reverence, and I adore
the Cross, but to carry it on my
Shoulder, to tear my way through
all most impervious Obstacles, and
vanquish stubborn Difficulties, I hold
it an Impossibility for me. If only
in seeking the Cross, not burden'd
with one, you my Lord have seen
me lose my Way, and that now,
weary of the Cross, I'm not able to
sustain its Weight, and mistake my
way in smooth and plain Ground.
How shall I be in a Capacity to tra-
vel through the rugged Steep of this
Mountain, and open my safe Pa-
ssage through the perplexing Bran-
chles that infest the Path of Command,
my Lord. I beseech you, that ana-
ther Path be made without a Cross,
by which I may reach your holy Pre-
sents. I rest but in this uneven Path;
and that I may be compassing the
safe of Abilition, made this reply:
Benet objected, said he, because my
Eternal Providence has ordain'd this
way for the Salvation of the World.
An indispensible Necessity requir-
ed it, and for the same reason

went it my self through a *Sea of Blood*. Fear not, *Philothea*, I'll be thy Companion, thy Guide, and thy Protector; I'll be thy Strength, and Constancy: And so encourage thy Weakness with my Grace, as shall enable thee to carry my Cross with Life and Vigour.

The fear she was in that our Saviour was about to have her immediately undertake the Cross, forced from her this Answer. Your Power, my Lord, is without controul, and you can with ease draw out another Cross-less way to Heaven; your Actions are unconfined, and your Omnipotence is without limit. Consider that I am feeble, helpless, and wholly unable to grapple with such Sufferings as furiously menace me in this uneven Path; and that I have not Strength enough to carry the Cross without frequent Falls and Swoons. You were pleas'd to assure me (to give the way of the Cross a more pleasing relish) that it was *Easie and pleasant*; first convince me that it is *pleasant and easie*, before I

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arrive at the sad Knowledge that it is difficult by a repentant Experience. Your Prophet said that your way was *even* and *delightful*; represent it to me with its *Delights*, before I'm conducted to it as *even*: *Sweet is your Toak, and your Burthen light*, let me be sensible of its *levity*, and *agreeableness* before I assume a load which as yet seems ponderous to me. The Understanding once convinced and enlightened with those Rays with which you illustrate the Darkness in which Ignorance involves us, the Will follows without Regret. Let not my Impertinencies and want of true Knowledge weary your Patience, dear God, with instructing me and bearing with my Frailties, since you were pleas'd to be indefatigably laborious for my Redemption.

I'll conform my self then, *Philothea*, to thee, reply'd our *Saviour*, since thou wilt not stoop thy self into an humble Conformity with me. I'll first manifest to thee by force of Reason

Reason, then by Authority and Example, the Facility and Pleasure of the way of the Cross.

Know then, *Philathea*, that no sooner had the first of Men, as I told you, forfeited his Original Innocence, by transgressing my Command; but he divested himself of the immortal Robes of my Grace, and clad himself in Sin, Ignorance, and Mortality. The nature of his Crime drew that Punishment upon his Head, and upon the Heads of all future Generations. From that time, the *Flesh* and *Appetite* began to dispute the Commands of the Superior Part, and Fortitude utterly abandon'd the Soul; from that time, all Creatures, (who had been under *Adam's* Subjection, and paid Homage to his Person as long as his Allegiance to their Creator retain'd its first unblemish'd Purity,) with united consent revolted from their Obedience and Loyalty, as soon as he durst assume the boldness to declare himself a Rebel to his and their Lord. From that time the Elements

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Chappel of the Cross. 61

conspired to affront the Felicity of Man, which before labour'd to afford Diversion and Recreation without the least Alloy: And from that time, banish'd the Place of his Nativity, he began to suffer the Rigors, and unavoidable Miseries of his Exile: he begg'd his Sustenance at the expence of Sweat and Toil, for the Earth refused to give it him upon easier Terms. His cruel Executioners, Grief, Pain, and endless Anxieties, are his individual Companions: and, when he's seated on the Throne of those false Felicities, to the Acquisition of which his insatiable Appetite violently carries him, he's check'd with the Opposition of so strong a Tide of Disgusts, and unrelishing Displeasures, as spoils all those imaginary Contents levelld at by the haughty Aspirings of his restless Ambition. From this criminal State, this originally debauch'd Nature of Men, results as indispensable a Necessity to be attended with Afflictions in this Life, as Breathing and Nourishment are to live: inasmuch as the first

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Moment of Being, until the Arrest of Death, is nothing but a continued Chain of Miseries, and Unhappiness. Paint, *Philothea*, with thy ablest Skill a true Pourtraiture of thy most darling Pleasures; Pencil on the fair Tablet of thy Imagination, with all the Advantages thy Art can furnish thee, an Idea of thy most ravishing Delights, Contentments, and Diversions, tho' purchas'd at the price of my Displeasure; and (tho' solicitously sought by thee,) without regard of my Commands, of the Felicities thou forfeitest, and the Eternal Pains thou run'st into: Thou wilt by Experience find all those Chimerical Pleasures to be either lacquay'd, accompany'd or fore-run by such Distastes and biting Pains, as, if thou ballancest one with the other, thou'lt be convinced that the former are not only counterpois'd, but far outweigh'd by the latter. You must all suffer either *following* me, or *forsaking* me: You must suffer either by labouring to master the Difficulties that are met with in the way of the Cross, which

Chappel of the Cross. 63

which conducts you to Eternal Joy and Repose, or undergo Difficulties in pursuing another way which will lead you, burthen'd with your Sins, into the Everlasting Precipice of Hell.

I believe, said *Philorhea*, (since you, my Lord, affirm it) that much greater Afflictions are endured in compassing our vain ends, than in attaining Virtue: But what's the reason that Men chuse to suffer, for no other end but to *suffer*, and make not a wiser choice in setting Felicity for the end of their Suffering? What induces them to undergo Hardships and Dangers in this Life, flying from the Cross, to endless Torments; and not rather prefer the way of the Cross, which, through moderate Pains, conducts us to Everlasting Glory?

Because they chuse like Men whose Nature is corrupted (answer'd our *Saviour*) and because their depraved ill affected Appetite carries them in pursuit of present and false Delights, (tho' at the rate of infinite Labour and utmost Peril;) rather than after the
Pos-

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Possession of those which I have engaged my Word to grant them at a cheaper Price. Fools and mistrustful as they are of me, they regulate their Lives by what they see, and not by their *Belief*. They believe that there is a Heaven, but they see it not; they see the pleasing Entertainments and Dalliances of the World; they see them season'd and temper'd with Digests; but murther this; they more willingly embrace these short-lived Pleasures, threatn'd with a doom of everlasting Torments, than some inconsiderable Pains to be crown'd with Endless Felicity. This visible World, *Philother*, is an *Open* Enemy to the Invisible and Eternal; and this visible World drags Mortals through a Sea of Misery to plunge them in an Abyss of Immortal Tortures.

O my God, said *Philother*, said what a terrible Impasse, Folly, and Mischief is this? Without doubt it is the want of divine Faith, that so impetuously hurries and precipitates Souls into the Flames of Hell. Per liver

Chappel of the Cross. 65

liver me, O Lord, from this formidable Doom.

This it is, reply'd our Saviour, to which I sollicit, importune, and woe thee *Philothea*, whilst I perswade thee to carry thy Cross, but can't prevail. Thou declin'st *my* way, and wilt rather wander in thy *own*, without a Cross, and without a Conductor.

CHAP. IX.

Philothea by sundry Questions endeavours to be more assuredly inform'd of the way of the Cross, ere she engages in it. Our Saviour answers her Difficulties.

P*hilothea*, seeing her self convinc'd by our Saviour's Reasons, and at the same time feeling an inward Repugnance against the Execution of what she evidently knew to be most advisable and her true Interest, address her self to him in this manner.

Be

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Be pleas'd, O my Sovereign Lord and Master, to take pity on the Infirmary of my Nature, which yet, I am not able to overcome; instruct me how it is possible for that way to be *easy*, nay (which is yet more difficult) *pleasant* and *agreeable*, which cost You so many and so great Sufferings? Those Crosses of a prodigious Bulk and Size which I behold on that Mountain, with which those followers of you climb the steep Way, must necessarily damp their Courage, and oppress their feeble Shoulders. If *you*, my God, found that Cross, on which you expired, so heavy as to bear you to the Ground, what can be expected from *them*? What can you expect from *me*? The Cross that overthrows the Giant, will it not also overthrow the Dwarf? the Cross that over-charges the Divine Shoulders, will it not be too ponderous and insupportable for weak, and humane Ones? Continue, dearest Saviour, the Lessons with which you were about to instruct me, for I stand in need of strong
En-

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Encouragements to enable me for the performance of my Journey in that hard and rugged way of the Cross.

I've already told thee, *Philothea*, said our *Saviour*, the miserable State into which Original Sin had plunged the World; that the Sensitive Man, by representing the Pleasures and Felicities of this Life as things perfectly amiable in themselves and upon their own Account, had prevail'd with the Rational Man to adhere to, and cast himself upon the credit of that false Suggestion, into the Pursuit and Embraces of Temporal Delights, which ended in Eternal Torments. Thou knowest that God and Man stupendiously united in one Person, was only able to work this necessary Change of Mens Affections; and that in the fulness of time I descended upon Earth, was born of a Mother whose Condition in the World was mean and obscure, the place of my Nativity was a Stable, my Attendants were two Beasts of Slavery: This State of Poverty,
Philo.

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Philothea, in which I made my first Appearance to the World, and continued through the whole Course of my Life, I voluntarily submitted to, that I might teach Mankind by my Example to a true contempt of Riches, Honours, Pleasures, and whatever else was apt to withdraw the Hearts of Men from their true Interest and only Happiness. My whole Life was full of innumerable Crosses, Indignities, Affronts, and Pains, to instruct Men how necessary it is to wean themselves from their effeminate Ease, from their foolish Love of transitory Preferments, from their Pride of Heart, and Sloth to vertuous Actions. Thou canst not be ignorant of what I suffered in the Courts of *Herod* and *Pilate*, since thou so well remembrest that I sunk under the weight of the Cross as I was going to mount *Calvary*; but thou oughtest to know that what happened was to let you see the greatness of my former Sufferings, and the weight of those Sins (thine, *Philothea*, among the rest)

for

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for which I was going to expire on the Cross. And is it a slight Obligation for the Creator of the World to lay aside Empire, to abandon Heaven, and come in Person to shew you the way to Eternal Happiness? Is it a small effect of Goodness in the Eternal Being, whose *Self-existence* involves Essential Happiness *in and to himself*, to assume your Nature, and to expose himself to the utmost Calamities and Misery that can befall it, for no other end than to redeem Mankind from Sin, and rescue it from the brink of Hell into which it was precipitating itself? And is it an inconsiderable mark of his Love and Friendship, to become Man that he himself might practice the way which he taught was necessary to Salvation, and, as an utmost Testimony, lay down his Life for your sake? Or rather, *Philothea*, was there ever Obligation, was there ever Goodness, Love and Friendship parallel to *mine*? Confess with Blushes and Confusion in thy Face that I have done infinitely more to make thee

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thee happy than thou art willing to act in thy own behalf: And yet all the *Hardships* to which I have exposed my self are *pleasing* to me since they have ransom'd Millions of Souls which have been, and are yet to be born from Eternal Slavery. I my self have led the way which I taught others to go, as the only one that was conducive to Happiness; I not only preach'd Poverty, Patience, Meekness, a perfect Love of God, above all the Allurements of this World, and of thy Neighbours true Good equal with that of thy own: but confirm'd my Doctrine by my Example. Neither does my Doctrine any ways shock unprejudic'd Reason; for, if I taught you to despise the World, it was to the End you shou'd disengage your Affections from a thing from whence you cou'd reap no solid Felicity, since it will infallibly be destroy'd, and you, when 'tis too late, bewail with Tears the having foolishly misplaced your Heart upon an Object that never had any real worth: And, when I taught that

GOD

Chappel of the Cross. 71

GOD alone was to be loved, and that all things were to be suffer'd rather than forego the doing of it, and in order to the accomplishment of that necessary Work; I did so because nothing else cou'd render you perfectly happy, and no other Object cou'd satisfie the Desires of a Rational Being. Besides, tell me, *Philotea*, if thou art able, what Difficulties, what Disquiets, what Dangers Men voluntarily undergo in the pursuit of some foolish Passion, or to purchase the favour of a Prince, without being assured of attaining either of them; or, when attain'd, whether their Mind will be entirely at rest, or the possession continue as long as they desire? Are not the greatest Pleasures *temper'd* with some disgustful *Alloy*; or if not, does any expect to enjoy them *always*?

For, when those bewitching Prejudices are removed from their Reason, now they plainly see all their worldly Pleasures to which they had ever habituated themselves, were, in reality, so many gross Impostures
put

put upon them by the World, enchanting their corrupt Nature: whence it comes to pass that their Judgment detests and abhors them: And yet, their Misery is such, those ill placed Affections must now inseparably stick in their depraved Will, to torture them Eternally.

Moreover, it being evident, that Pains, Anxieties, Cares, Tribulations and Crosses are individual Companions of corrupted Nature (and to which I also became voluntarily subject for your sake) and since it neither has nor shall be register'd in the Memory of any Age, that so much as one of the Race of *Adam* has escaped the fatal Consequence of Original Sin, entail'd as a Penalty altogether inseparable upon vitiated and debauch'd humane Nature: Why, *Philothea*, art thou so much daunted at the Apprehension of suffering with a Cross? If thou can'st not avoid it for love of the *World*, why art thou averse from exposing thy self to some Pains for the sake of a much better Fortune? If thou must

Chappel of the Cross. 73

must necessarily endure Hardships and Tribulations whilst thou servest under the Colours of *Sin*, why wilt thou not much rather endure them under the Standard of the Cross, or for *my* sake? If thou drag'st thy inseparable Afflictions after thee, even whilst thou art a Fugitive from the Cross and Me, what seduces thee from suffering with me in the way of the Cross? If, even without a Cross, 'tis impossible to shun being rack'd and crucify'd with a Thousand Injuries and Disgusts, why declinest thou suffering *with a Cross* attended by everlasting Trophies? If thou must suffer on an infamous Scaffold, in utter Disgrace, and out of favour with the World and Me too, why not rather on *my Cross*, in *my Favour*, and *Esteem*? And, lastly, if thou must suffer here to suffer endless Torments hereafter, does not Reason oblige thee to prefer equivalent Sufferings for *my* sake, that thou may'st have them gloriously changed into Eternal Felicities? Ah! *Philothea*, is it not wise and
E pru-

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prudent in you, to chuse Pains, immortal in their Continuance, and mortal in their Punishment, as a recompence for some slight and dying Pleasures? And, is it not most indiscreetly done, to fly from the Enjoyment of Eternal Glory, for fear of enduring some Transitory, or short lived Affliction?

See how many have suffer'd either *without me*, or *against me*; and see how many have suffer'd for *my sake*, and in *my company*. Behold, *Cain*, that wicked Son, and cruel Brother; that Ring-leader of Malefactors and Head of the condemn'd Generation: What has he not suffer'd whilst being *against me*, he lived a Vagabond in the World? What did he not suffer during his sinful Life? What in his untimely Death? And with what Torments has he not been in Hell, and what is he not still to undergo?

See, on the contrary, his Brother *Abel*, harmless, humble and obsequious to his Parents and my Commands; a Man of sincere meaning
and

Chappel of the Cross. 75

and virtuous Life! Consider with what short Pains he attain'd to be the perfect Pattern, and Image of Innocence, and therefore crown'd with never-dying Happiness. From the time of this primitive Vertue, and that first barbarous Fratricide, reckon, *Philothea*, and take a general List of all the Generations of Man till this Moment; and thou wilt find nothing but Pains *without a Cross* in the *Wicked*, and Pains *with a Cross*, or for *my sake*, in the *Good*. The Pains of the wicked without a Cross, or in gratifying their sensual Appetite, are seconded with Eternal Torments; and the Pains of the Good with a Cross, are rewarded with a never-fading Crown of Glory. Who then, *Philothea*, is so dull of Sense, who of so brutish an Understanding; as to chuse Afflictions *without a Cross*, and be eternally tormented hereafter? And not to endure Sufferings *with a Cross* to be for ever happy in Heaven?

C H A P. X.

Philothea acknowledges the efficacy of our Saviour's Discourse. She, nevertheless represents her Weakness, and refuses to carry the Cross.

MY Lord, said *Philothea*, the truth of what you say is undeniable, and heavenly, like your self; but tho' you evince the *Justice* there is in suffering, permit me to say that you have not proved its *Facility* and *Sweetness*, as I desired. My Understanding, O God, is satisfy'd that it behoves me to take up my Cross and follow you; but my Weakness is not convinced that it will be able to carry it: And you, O infinite Clemency, shou'd not over-load me with what is *Just*, but grant me that which is *sweet*, easie, and agreeable as well to me, as to that endearing *Attribute*.

I am measuring, O Lord, my Abilities with the weight of the Burthen, and examining whether I have strength

Chappel of the Cross. 77

strength to bear it; I endeavour to raise the Cross from this Ground, or rather, I receive it from your Almighty Hands, but I sink under so great a Load: What success then can I hope from my Endeavours?

What strength can support a Cross so terrible, so large, and weighty, as that which I see carried by the religious Man striving to ascend and overcome as well the pressure of his Burthen, as the difficulties of the Mountain? Or that sustain'd by that Holy Priest, who, in my sight, has twice already lifted it from the Earth on which it fell; and pursued his way? I confess, my Eternal Sovereign, that the Cross is Holy, Good, Necessary, Convenient, and preferable to the Pains we suffer without one, in this miserable World: But I beseech you, most merciful God, make this Goodness *Easie*, and let that which is Holy and Meritorious, be sweet and pleasing.

What imports it's being good in effect, if it be more painful than the Disease? There are Stomachs so

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weak,

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weak, as can't bear the bitterness of a Purge, tho' never so wholsom; and presently return it back, tho' at the Peril of their Health. A Present of Gold is very acceptable, but, if the Quantity be so great as to o'erwhelm the Bearer, and the condition be that it must not be his, unless he can carry it, little Advantage will be reap'd from the Gift. Your holy Cross is of much greater value than Gold, and of infinite Merit and Virtue; yet I can't but tremble with the Apprehension, least so vast a Load of what is good and precious, shou'd over-poise my Weakness, and be impossible for me to carry, because full of Pain and Distast.

I say not that the Wicked are exempt from Afflictions, but that they suffer with greater Satisfaction than the good; for Sinners endure with Pleasures, the Vertuous undergo Pains without any Content. The Sufferings of evil Men proceed only from swimming *with the Stream* of their Inclinations; but the disquiets of the Just, from striving
against

Chappel of the Cross. 79

against the Tide of their Nature, and combating the Propensions of the sensitive Man. The good suffer ascending, the wicked descending.

Cease, Philothea, reply'd our Saviour, cease to argue according to the Dictates of thy perverted Reason; for, tho' it be true that the good suffer in their Ascent, and the bad in their Descent, yet if I ask you whether they go who suffer descending, you must reply, to *Hell*; and, if I demand whether the steep Ascent leads those who climb it with the pain and toil of my Cross, if you answer truly you must say, to *Heaven*. How comes it then to pass, Philothea, that you continue so inconsiderate and foolish a Discourse; and are not terrify'd at the very thought of this easie way of descending into so dangerous a Precipice?

Is it possible you shou'd cover Facility and Sweetness in your way to Punishment and Misery? Or can you so doatingly affect a favourable Gale that blows to Eternal Torments? If a Malefactor were to ride

from Prison to the place of Execution, (and were not guided by Despair) wou'd he chuse a swift, or a slow and gentle Pace? Consider how earnestly the sick Man desires to continue in the World, rather than undergo the stroke of Death; reflect how (like Persons in danger to be drown'd) he eagerly catches hold on all appearing and uncertain Remedies of Life, to avoid the Jaws of Death: And wou'd he esteem it a Happiness that the end of his Life shou'd be hasten'd, who makes use of his utmost Endeavours and Desires to preserve it?

The greatest Mischief that can befall Sinners, is the Facility of their Pleasures, the Sweetness of their Crimes, the Cheat put upon them by their Delights, the swift career they make *Down-hill*, and their sailing with Wind and Tide, till they reach the eternal Miseries of *Hell*, which are endless Moans, unprofitable Tears, and most tormenting Anguish.

Much

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Much better wou'd it be for them to encounter *Difficulties* in their Journey, than to travel *smoothly* in the ways of Sin, to future Torments. It wou'd be more advantageous for them to walk with Discontents that will perish ; than to glide along the Stream of uninterrupted Pleasures into Eternal Pains and Tortures. This *Easiness*, *Philothea*, is that which ruins them ; for the natural Conformity, or rather, sympathy between the World and Sensitive Man, renders all its Treacheries so charming, and its Snares so agreeable ; that those who have made themselves unworthy of my Grace, yielding to its Allurements, and folded in the soft Embraces of Sin, insensibly, yet swiftly, fall into the Torments of Hell that will endure Eternities of Ages.

Es CHAP.

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3 C H A P. XI.

Philothea renews her suit to Almighty God, for rendering the way of the Cross pleasant, pressing it with fresh Arguments; she receives Satisfaction in her doubts.

Since you, my Lord, said *Philothea*, have vouchsafed your Attention, and stoop'd the Heavens to my sad Complaints, refuse not, I beseech you, your Patience to my Importunities. I see evidently, O Eternal Majesty, that the Facility wicked Men find in sinning and suffering is the Fountain whence springs their everlasting Mishaps: For certain it is that to walk without Interruption to offend, is to go smoothly to the place of Punishment, and that to travel lightly in the ways of Sin to Temporal Afflictions, is to run swiftly to Eternal ones.

But the weakness of my Understanding permits me not to comprehend this Mystery, and the dullness of

Chappel of the Cross. 83

of my Brain gives birth to some scruples which I presume you'll give me leave to utter ; for if it is so great an Evil to walk *undisturbedly* to Sin, 'tis apparent that it can't be good to go *heavily* to *Virtue* : If it is most hurtful to travel with Facility to offend, I believe 'tis impossible it shou'd be either good or delightful to go with a lame and heavy pace, halting as it were after you, and hinder'd with many Obstacles, Intricacies, and Crosses. Why, my Lord, do you charge those, who seek and follow you, with such weighty Burthens ? Why do you oblige them to ascend through narrow Streights, and conquer Difficulties ? Is it not enough that the way in which they walk is rough and uneven, and the Mountain steep and craggy, but their Shoulders must be also loaded with a Cross, and that of so large a Size as the very sight of it is terrible ? Wou'd it not be much better, for those who follow, seek and serve you, to go in a level and plain way, without any Disturbance, or Opposition ?

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sition? And wou'd it not be infinitely better to run with Alacrity and Pleasure descending, to pursue, serve, and adore you? And shall feeble I, destitute of Courage and Virtue, be able to endure the weight of the Cross, and Difficulties of the Way, if I have not strength enough to master the Steepness of the Ascent?

This false Perswasion of thine, *Philotea*, reply'd our Saviour, that the way of the Cross is not amiable, derives its Origin from thy not comprehending its wonderful and ineffable Mystery; and for this Reason thou dost not penetrate into the Excellency of its way, and art ignorant that it is neither tedious nor void of Pleasure. This prejudicial Opinion is the Child of an unhappy Parent dwelling within thee; which is, as I hinted before, thy being govern'd by what is Visible, and thy forgetfulness of what is Invisible; thy embracing Appearances, and turning away thy self from what is true and solid.

Thou

Chappel of the Cross. 85

Thou look'st on Certainty and Truth, *Philothea*, with a false and deceitful Prospective; the cheating and faithless Pleasures of the World are the Glasses through which thou see'st: And as he who looks through a green Glass, has all Objects represented to him under that Colour, not under that which is natural to them; so thou, *Philothea*, who beholdest spiritual Objects with deluding, weak, and carnal Eyes, neither understandest, nor judgest rightly of the way of the Cross.

Thou art afraid of those weighty Crosses carried by my Servants climbing up that Hill; but those which thou imaginest to be Heavy and Burthensom, they esteem Light and Easie: Thou think'st them troublesome, they find them pleasing and delightful; that Cross which to thee seems a Load, is an Alleviation of it. The Plumes of the Birds that in appearance are bulky and ponderous, are the cause of their Activity and Flight. The Sails of a Ship, which swoln with the Wind, seem
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to o'erburthen the Vessel, are that by which it moves with so much speed. Thou knowest nothing, *Philotheca*, of what is Good and Holy, and yet thou measurest both one and the other by the Ell of Falshood, and Vanity: Whereas 'tis impossible that such Rules shou'd direct thee to the Knowledge of Truth and Vertue.

See'st thou not, foolish *Philotheca*, the Cheat clearly enough, to disabuse thy self? See'st thou not how those who carry great Crosses, walk faster and with more Agility than the others? See'st thou not that those Crosses which to thee seem *heaviest*, are born by them, as if they were *very light*? See'st thou not that those who support the biggest Crosses give aid to the Bearers of the little ones? That those who are barefoot, tread more firmly; and with greater boldness trample on Thistles, Brambles, and the Points of Rocks? That those who are thinnest clad, endure the most piercing Cold with Pleasure, whilst those who are warmly wrapp'd suffer it with Impatience? See'st thou

Chappel of the Cross. 87

thou not that Servant of mine who carries that most weighty Cross, which to thee seems to be made of Lead, with what Chearfulness, Delight, and Ease, he mounts the craggy Steep, as if his Cross were only of Cork? And see'st thou not the other, who suitably to the weakness of his Constitution, carries that Cross of Straw, puffs and blows in his Ascent, and is hardly able to bear his Burthen?

Is it possible, *Philothea*, that this Miracle which appears to thy Eyes, shou'd not guide thy Understanding to know that inward and superior Virtue which thou see'st not? Is it possible that thou shou'dst yet be ignorant that the Mystery of the Cross comprehends such Virtue, as to sweeten what is bitter, and make ease and delightful, what of it self, is difficult and unpleasant? And that by how much the more it weighs, the more it alleviates; that the more it oppresses, the more it recreates; and the more it seems to hin-

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hinder, the more it facilitates the way?

Who ever carried a Cross comparable to mine? And yet, at the same time; I refresh, strengthen, and encourage all Men to carry each his own Cross; nay, if I had not born my Cross, none wou'd have been able to serve and follow me with theirs. Apprehendest thou yet, how it comes to pass that the greater Crosses not only relieve and succour the Bearers of them, but also sweeten and comfort them in such a manner as to be enabled with the over-plus of their Strength, to assist those who are distressed with their little ones?

What think'st thou of the Cross born by my Mother? Of the Sword of *Simeon* stabb'd through her Heart? Reflect now who it was that gave her Strength to carry so great a Cross: And if she her self by an Example of Constancy and Courage which she gave, has not animated many Saints to carry *theirs*?

Hath

Chappel of the Cross. 89

Hath not *Peter*, my Substitute and Vicar, with the other Apostles, been the most eminent and zealous Followers of my Cross? Are not they the Persons who publish'd and preach'd it to the World? And the valiant Captains of the Cross, who by their Works and Examples engaged Thousands to imitate them? Those who underwent the greatest Crosses, were they not the Persons who encouraged others to sustain their little ones? You must not therefore, *Philothea*, take your Measures of the Cross from superficial Appearances, but from what is real and substantial. You must not take your Dimensions of the Cross, from its Bulk and seeming Weightiness, but from the force of their Love who bear it, and from the powerful Aid which they receive from my Grace. It follows then, that in the way of the Cross, the Less is the Greater, and the Greater Cross is the Less.

Answer me, *Philothea*; if I shou'd lay, upon thy Shoulders, a Cross of the bigness of a Mountain, and, with

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with my Omnipotency, sustain it, in such a manner, as it shou'd rest lightly upon thee; scarce touching any part of thee; is it not certain that you wou'd not only endure it, but move easily with it? 'Tis manifest you wou'd. On the other side, shou'd I lay upon you a Cross of a Hundred Pound weight, without giving any Assistance, cou'd you walk with it? Assuredly you cou'd not. But if my Grace sustain its weight, so that you only *seem* to bear it, and burn with a strong Desire, and anxious Concern to assume the whole Burthen upon you, wou'd it not then be Easie?

Have you not seen, *Philothea*, some Stones of a vast bigness, call'd the *Pumices*, and others of the same Nature which are cast out by the Eruptions of the adjoyning flaming Mountains; out of which the Fire has exhaled and dried up all their Moisture: And observ'd what Amazement they create in the Beholders, before they touch them, but, when handled; are found to be of
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Chappel of the Cross. 91

no weight? So are the Crosses which appear to you of a mountainous Size, in which the fervor of my Love has consumed and dried up all that's heavy, unpleasing, and burthenfome, nothing being left but what is light, and void of trouble.

Tell me, *Philothea*, if a superior Power shou'd impose a heavy Load upon a Man who in appearance was very weak, and insufficient to bear it; but if an inward and unseen Strength made him capable of a more weighty Burthen, what harm wou'd he receive? Is it not said that the *Remora* stops the course of a Ship under Sail? The littleness of the Body hinders not its Operation with effect, if it is animated with a Virtue that gives it a Strength superior to all Difficulties.

Tell me, if Two Men shou'd carry a Cross of an extraordinary weight, one of them being extreamly feeble, the other immensly strong; so that what was deficient through the weakness of one, was abundantly supply'd by the other's Strength: What

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What imports the feebleness on one side, if the others Strength make good that defect? You see, *Philothea*, the weak Man carrying the Cross; but the secret Virtue, Strength, and Vigour which I bestow, is conceal'd from your sight: And in this is grounded your mistake of things, you see the Exterior, but not the Interior.

Tho' great Crosses without my Grace are heavy, yet with the aid of it they are light, and comfortable. Tho' it were impossible for you, if destitute of my Assistance, to stand under the Load; yet, succour'd by me, they are only so weighty as to give your Virtue an easie Subject for Merit, and alleviate what's painful. Do you see, *Philothea*, how those Crosses which you imagin'd troublesome and heavy, are Wings for you to fly withal in the way of Virtue?

And do you believe that I'll load you with a greater Burthen than you will be able to bear? Do you believe me so unjust as to lay such a Cross upon
upon

Chappel of the Cross. 93

upon you, as will oppress your Weakness? Wou'd I, peradventure, burthen your Shoulders with any thing intolerable? Believe, *Philothea*, I'm faithful to my Word; believe that I'll either detract from the weight of the Cross, or proportion thy forces to it: And if I lessen its weight, it is to aid the weakness of your Nature; if I add Strength, my Grace takes the Load upon itself.

What imports it, that, in Appearance, the entire heaviness remains, if, in effect, I remove the trouble of its weight? Credit me, *Philothea*, there is no Physician who tenderly loves his Patient, that so exactly measures and weighs the Drams of Aloes and what is sweet, tempering them so equally as it may be taken without offence to the Pallate of the Patient; as I measure, ballance, and proportion the Weight and Displeasure of the Cross, till he that follows me is capable of bearing it.

Think, *Philothea*, that when I said, *Let him, that will follow me, take up his Cross and come after*, I had even then

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then provided Crosses fitted and accommodated to all those who were to follow my Steps. Do you imagine that I wou'd lead a way in which it wou'd be impossible for you to follow me? I descended to Earth to take you with me to Heaven, and wou'd I open a way thither, that wou'd lose you on Earth? And know, *Philothea*, that if Pleasures disposed you more for Salvation, than Crosses and Afflictions, be assured that the way to Heaven shou'd be strew'd with Pleasures and Delights, to the end that all might be happy, and none miserable.

C H A P. XII.

Philothea urges our Saviour to make a different way from that of the Cross: He lets her see that she's mistaken in the thing she desires.

AS soon as our Saviour had done speaking; *Philothea* taking hold of his last Words, and conceiving that

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that she had found something in them which wou'd turn to her Advantage, and from whence she might derive some Consolation for the Disquiets of her Souly, addrest herself to him in these Terms.

I say not, Eternal Sovereign, that the Delights of Sin, or the Sins that bring Pleasure along with them; can be either a way to follow you, or a Disposition to attain you: For 'tis apparent, that the greatest Evil, which is Sin, can't be a means to acquire the highest Good, which is he who is infinitely so.

'Tis manifest that to imitate you, is not to persecute you: 'Tis evident if you came, as Lord and Master of Virtue, to instruct the World, and bestow the regency of it upon Virtue, to the end Sin might be banish'd, that it is not possible for Vice to conduct us in your Service: And it is most certain that since the Good is the supreme Rule by which we must order and frame our lives, and you having given your self (who are essentially all that's good and excellent)

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lent) for our Rule; we can't follow you, whilst at the same time, we stray from our guide, and employ our utmost Endeavours to break the divine Rule with a continuance of our Crimes.

This is not the thing that I desire, but that you wou'd be pleas'd to frame a way for *me* (since you will not grant it to others) that is not pester'd with so many Difficulties and Obstacles, as is the holy, painful, and unpleasant way of the Cross, which not only o'ercharges those who embrace it, but startles and daunts those who only think on't.

And I not only intreat you, my Lord, to order another way less painful for my self, but also, humbly petition the same for others; for I wish with all my Soul, that you may have many Followers, many *Inamorato's*, many Servants and Votaries, and innumerable Adorers. I say not, that those who follow you in the laborious and toilsome way of the Cross, do not adore you with greater Affection, and do not merit more
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Chappel of the Cross. 97

than those who venerate and worship you without undergoing Pains and Afflictions; but that some of those, who desire to follow you, will faint in the Enterprize, and many others, terrify'd with the thoughts of such a difficult way, will not only cease to follow you, but will offend and persecute you. If you wou'd please to make a way, for me and others like my self, of decent, and modest Recreations and Liberty, not stain'd with any Evil, but full of harmless Mirth and innocent Pastimes, without Pennance and Rigours, as well interior, as exterior, without Fastings, Obligations, or any of those Precepts that afflict and mortifie the Body, in which we might go contentedly, with Pleasure and without any Disturbance: I doubt not but this way of following you, wou'd be less perfect than that of the Cross, yet 'tis certain that the *number* of your followers wou'd be infinitely increas'd; and since I desire that Multitudes shou'd walk in your way, 'tis more for

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your sake than mine, yet I desire this new one.

Our *Saviour* observing the Mask that cover'd her true and real meaning, and that under the disguise of Charity she conceal'd her own Imperfections, and Self-interest, made this reply. O *Philothea*, how like a miserable and foolish Woman you talk? You wou'd have me make another way for you, under the pretence of having it done for my sake; this wou'd be *your* way, and not *mine*; your way wou'd lead to Perdition, mine to Salvation: And will you rather be conducted in your *own* way to Eternal Misery, than in *mine* to Eternal Happiness?

What way is this, pursued He, fashion'd by thy sick and crazy Imagination? What Delights and Recreations are those, which being Sensual, you wou'd have me esteem as Spiritual? Must I reward your Recreations, Merriments and Pastimes, with Heaven? Shall your Corporal Delights merit my Enjoyment? Shall I give you Glory because you

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indulge your Appetites in the World? And shall I bestow Eternal Bliss upon you, because you entertain your selves with Temporal and brittle Delights? What do you give to oblige me to a Requital? At what rate do you purchase Eternal Glory? Wou'd you have two Glories? One in the World amongst Sinners, and another in Heaven amongst the Blessed? One in your place of Banishment, the other in your more native Country? I descended upon Earth to suffer, and wou'd you ascend to Heaven without tasting of the bitter Cup? I came amongst you clad in Misery, and wou'd you come to me environ'd with Pleasures through the way of Ease?

And tell me, simple *Philotheta*, how is't possible to contain your self within the limits of what may be permitted, without entrenching upon what is prohibited? If you meet with nothing but Divertisements in your Life-time, if you never interdict your self a Delight, never check your too forward Appetite, never

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combat a Temptation, and if you never suffer any Mishap, how is't possible, that, leading a free, soft, jovial, and pleasant Life, how I say, is't possible that your too insolent Appetite and naturally bent to Evil, shou'd observe a due Restraint? The Saints can hardly moderate and tame the Appetite without an almost perpetual use of their Disciplines, their severe Fastings, and Mortifications; and do you think to follow me in the way of Pleasures and Delights, (tho' you paint 'em free from Sin, and undisturb'd by Passions) if you restrain not your Desires and keep my Precepts?

My Servant *Paul*, handles himself with Rigour, because sensible of a Law within him that is repugnant to his Reason; and do you pretend (whilst lull'd in Delight) to curb your Appetite, and subdue that Law which *Paul* resented in himself? Art thou ignorant, *Philothea*, that the Life of Man upon Earth is a continual War? Dost thou not yet know that

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that the *Carnal* and *Spiritual* Man mutually fight against each other? Enmities of this Nature ever presuppose a Contrariety. But, if the Soul is enslaved to the Body, whence will it derive either Courage or Power to resist? If they are confederate, what motive wilt thou find to begin a quarrel? What Strength will Reason summon to her rescue, if the Appetite always bear the sway?

If in this imaginary way, *Philothea*, which you have invented, all things are managed by the commanding Appetite, whose aim is Delight and Pleasure, what forces can the Soul arm for the repressing that imperious and domineering Tyrant? Those who entrust themselves to the Conduct of that erroneous way, may perhaps enter it with a design to follow me, but, in the end wou'd find they had gone from me: They wou'd embrace it in hopes of reaping Pleasures and Satisfaction; but not with an intention to serve, please, and imitate *Me*. When they have

consumed a few Months in this agreeable way, strow'd with undisturb'd Pastimes, Recreations, and Mirth, do you think they'll be improved in the love of Heaven? Or that they'll be more disposed to leave this World that they may receive the recompense of their well-spent time?

And is't possible, *Philothea*, that Shame appears not in Blushes on thy Face for proposing a way of Pleasures and Delights without a Cross (tho' harmless and tolerable, as you term them) to *Me*, who for your Interest trampled on Felicities, and despised all worldly Honour to embrace Afflictions and a Death on the Cross? To me, who from the first Moment of my Birth, till the last of my Life toil'd and sweat to found and establish the way of the Cross? Is't possible that, without marks of Confusion thou can'st pretend to an easie and delightful way, and declare as much to me, who for your sake became a *Man of Grief*? And tho' my Body is no longer susceptible of such

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Chappel of the Cross. 103

Impressions, I yet wear on my Hands, Feet and Side, as everlasting Trophies of my tenderest and most disinterested and affectionate Love; the Scars of those Wounds that put me to so great and so terrible Pains.

Can it be, thou shou'dst desire to follow me, without imitating my Life? Can it be, thou shou'dst desire a different way from that I made choice of? Can it be thou shou'dst raise thy Ambition to my Crown and Glory, and yet refuse to follow my Example? Think'st thou, that to follow me in the way of Ease and Pleasure, is to imitate me who lived in Tribulation and Distress? Is it thus thou repay'st the Sincerity of my Love? Wou'd the Soldier imitate his Captain, if he shou'd be revelling amongst his Comerades, whilst his Captain was engaged in a dangerous Combat?

If to imitate me is to labour for your own Happiness, and that you approach nearer to me, the more you represent me in your Life; you who greedily cover Merriments, Pastimes,

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stimes, and Delights, in what do you imitate me? What marks of Resemblance do you bear with the Actions of my Life? If I said that I had set you an Example by which you might order the conduct of your lives, in what do you resemble him who dy'd on a Cross for your Redemption, if you indulge your Ease, gratifie your Senses, and set your Heart upon Delights?

I'm not so rigid, *Philothea*, as to forbid my Followers their Recreations: I permit those that travel in the way of the Cross, to enjoy reasonable Pleasures; but not as you wou'd have it, to frame a way *composed* of Pleasures, Pastimes and Delights, but, to sweeten their painful Journey, I permit harmless Diversions, such as are not contrary to my Law; but not, as you desire, a Lifetime spent in the height of sports, and the full Possession of whatsoever your Heart desires.

As there cou'd never have been a Christian without a Christ, and Christ had never been without a Cross

Chappel of the Cross. 105

Cross; (for if I had not taken restless pains to teach and preach, and confirm my Doctrine by my Example, the Work of Man's Salvation wou'd never have been perfected) so there can be no true Christian who does not practically shew the Faith that he professes. For this Reason, my Church adds to the Divine Commandments, Her *Precepts*; to the end you may be Christians in effect: As if a Cross were laid on your Shoulders, to be a Badge of Christianity.

For this purpose are order'd the observance of Fasts and holy Festivals, with other penal and distastful Injunctions: To this end were directed the pious Endeavours of innumerable Saints; who, as it were to distinguish themselves, and manifest their Faith by the Sanctity of their Lives, waged a continual War against their Appetite, which was in perpetual Rebellion against Reason, and against my Law. And at this Mark aim'd those words of mine, *The Kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and*

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is only won by vigorous Assaults, to curb your corrupt Nature : And also for this end I bid my followers take up their Cross and come after me. And thus, feeble and cowardly Philothea, to shun the way of the Cross, and run in search of your chimerical way of Pleasures and Delights, is to fly from the imitating his Example who lived in Afflictions, and dy'd on a Cross for you : And let me tell you, that whoever follows me not in this Life with a Cross, shall not enjoy me in the next.

C H A P. XIII

Philothea asks our Saviour how it is possible for those to be chearful who pursue the way of the Cross in Tears, Sighs, and Lamentations ; he gives her the Reason of it.

MY Lord, said Philothea, I perfectly believe, what you are pleas'd to say, and am entirely convinced that the way of the Cross is
Holy

Chappel of the Cross. 107

Holy and Reasonable; but that it is *Agreeable and Pleasant*, surpasses my *Understanding*. Wou'd you, my Lord, have my Faith contradict my Eyes? If I both hear and see the Pains that are taken to master the Difficulties of that Hill which you have shew'd me, and the wan decay'd Complexion of those that travel with their Crosses; if, without illusion I behold the Tears, and hear their Moans, shall I believe that he who laments and sighs is not sensible of Pain and Affliction?

If I see that sad *Anchoret* pursuing his tedious way with a tormenting Cross on his Shoulders, a River of Tears streaming from his Eyes, and rending the Air with his Sighs and Lamentations; if I behold that Maid, of a tender and delicate Constitution, barefoot, unclad, and in extreme Poverty; leaving, as she goes along, the Impression of her Feet in the Blood that trickles apace from her Body to the Earth: And, if my Eyes scarce encounter a Face that is not bathed in Sweat and Tears, can
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you, my God, exact of me a Belief contrary to what I plainly both hear and see? 'Tis a strong Proof of Obedience you demand, when you bid the Soul give to its Eyes the Lye, command it not to know what it beholds, and to deny that my Ears are struck with the Sound which they most evidently hear. Did not we receive our Senses from your Bounty, to the end we might by them be inform'd of and know what passes in the World about us? How then, most dread Majesty, shall I discredit my Senses, and believe that to Suffer is a Recreation, and to undergo Afflictions, a Sport?

'Tis true, *Philothea*, answer'd our Saviour, that Objects are convey'd through the Senses to the Understanding, and therefore Sounds affect the hearing, and what is visible makes Impression upon the Sight, from whence they are carried to the Brain; and you know by Experience that Tears, Sighs, and Moans are signs of Grief: Indeed, the different Sounds or Strokes upon the Organ are the
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Chappel of the Cross. 109

proper Object of *Hearing*, but that they are the effects of Grief is known by an act of *Reasoning* which is proper to the *Soul*. You must therefore have a care lest you confound the Operations of the Senses, with those of the Understanding. You see Tears, and hear Sighs and Lamentations, that is, those different Sounds affect the Ears after different ways; but the cause of this is known by *Discourse* and *Reasoning* upon it: And, if you are not careful, you may make a wrong Judgment of it, as you do in this Case. I grant you that Sighs and Complaints are sometimes the effects of Grief, but if you at this time conclude that the Difficulties of the Way are the cause of it, you are certainly mistaken. Had you, *Philothea*, beheld *Magdalen* at my Feet, washing them with her Tears, wiping them with her dishevell'd Hair; and her Breast, not able to contain her Grief, bursting into Throbs, and Sighs, with extremest Violence; What Judgment wou'd you have made of this vehement Sorrow, expressed

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preſt in moſt paſſionate Effects? 'Tis plain, that, if you purſued your way of judging by Appearance, you'd have believed that ſhe was either afflicted with ſome corporeal Pain, or lay under the heavy Preſſure of a deſperately troubled Mind, occaſion'd by the Rigour of my Doctrine, which bids all thoſe who will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, to forſake the Pleaſures of the World, the doing which appears ſo difficult, and terrible to you. But how deludedly, and how erroneouſly wou'dſt thou have paſs'd thy Judgment? *Magdalen* was not capable of being touch'd with thoſe mean Conſiderations, tho' not long before ſhe had been a moſt deſperate Sinner, and had wholly abandon'd her ſelf to the Pleaſures of the World: A mixture of Love and Sorrow o'rwhelm'd her penitent Soul, and the Love of me, which had perfectly extinguiſh'd her vicious Flames, together with a real and lively Senſe of the loſs of ſo much time as ſhe had waſted in the purſuit of Vanity and Folly, to the putting in manifeſt
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Chappel of the Cross. 111

Hazard those everlasting Felicities of which she had heard me discourse with a great deal of Plainness and Evidence, were the causes of her Grief, and the two Sources whence flow'd her penitential Tears that ended not but with her Life. Neither that *Anchoret*, nor that Maid whom you see are afflicted at the Hardships with which the way to Heaven, to thee, seems paved: They thirst, and sigh after Me, the living Fountain of those Streams that give Eternal Life, and Perpetuity of uninterrupted Happiness to those who heartily desire it.

But, *Philothea*, tho' your Judgment is subject to Error in such cases; yet, since I have establish'd a more sure and unerring Principle, which is my self, *who am the Truth*; no falsehood can reside in my Verities, and in your Faith while you believe them, or deceive the believers of them. Hence it comes to pass, that, tho' Objects shou'd appear to your Senses in their natural Form and Figure, from whence you might conclude
them

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them to be such as are ordinarily represented to you under such Accidents, you must deny credit to your Senses, if I assure you that the Object is really different from what it seems to be. And, in the case of those Pains and Afflictions with which the followers of my Cross seem oppressed, you ought much rather yield assent to what *I say*, than to what *you see*. If 'tis plain that I've declared by the Mouth of my Prophet, that God is *Sweet*, as well as *Just*, why does my Justice startle thee? And why art thou not invited by my Sweetness? If thou acknowledgest these to be my Words, *Sweet is my yoke, and my burthen light*; why standest thou amazed at the Load? Why dost not embrace so fair an Invitation, nor believe either the lightness or sweetness of my Yoke? If the holy Prophet taught this truth of me, *Tast, and you shall find that our Lord is sweet*: What means this Unwillingness and Reluctance in thee to tast how sweet he is, that thou may'st behold in Heaven that God, of whose Bounty
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and Sweetness thou hast tasted on Earth? If my Cross is my Yoak, and I affirm that my Yoak is *easie* and *sweet*, why refusest thou to believe that my Cross is sweet and easie?

Wilt thou, *Philothea*, rather chuse to believe thy abused Eye-sight, than my true, certain, and holy Word? Do thy fallible and erroneous Senses peradventure dictate greater Certainities than my unerring Veracity? To those very Senses, by which thou art daily couzen'd, and flatter'd into Fooleries, and to pay Homage to Dirt and Corruption, dost thou surrender up thy Faith, rather than to my Truth and Light? Is't not enough, *Philothea*, that I say it? Can my Verity fail? The Generations of Men shall pass away, Heaven and Earth shall perish; but the least Tittle of what I say shall stand firm and unshaken to Eternity. But, since you will not approach me, in Faith, (as you ought, and it is most just you shoud) out of Compassion

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to thy Weakness, I'll stoop to thee
in Love and Patience.

C H A P. XIV.

*Our Saviour instructs Philothea, how
to suffer and rejoice, are things con-
sistent.*

I've already told you, *Philothea*,
said our Saviour continuing his
Discourse, that Man is a compound
of *Soul* and *Body*; the Operations of
the Soul, like her self, are wholly
Spiritual, and are distinguish'd in-
to *Understanding*, or *Knowledge*, and
Will, or a Power by which she
embraces one thing preferrably to a-
nother, and determines her self to
Action: And the Soul being the su-
perior Part, these Operations pro-
perly belong to it, and are the very
Soul it self. The Body or Inferior
part is of a mixt Nature, and com-
prehends the Sensitive, and Vegeta-
tive Being; its Operations are alto-
gether Corporeal: This corporeal
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Chappel of the Cross. 115

Nature is the Source and Womb of Passions. Fear, Anger, Hatred, sensual Desires, and Appetites, with the rest, are conceived in, and spring from the *Body*; and sometimes, by reason of the strict Union and Alliance with the *Soul*, she is put into a hurry and disorder by them, unless she is so much Mistress of her self as to make 'em submit to the Laws of Reason. Hence results, that a Person may at the same time be *glad*, and *sorry*; be afflicted, and pleas'd; be disquieted, and at rest; desire a thing, and abhor it; and notwithstanding the Detestation of it, be pleasingly flatter'd with the hopes, (nay, consent to, and procure) the Possession of it.

Hast thou not seen an affectionate Mother, apply a Remedy to her Child's Distemper, with what Reluctance she gives the bitter Potion, and resents most feelingly the pain her little one receives from it, and rejoices when 'tis taken? The Consideration of her Child's health creates Joy; and the natural Tenderness

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derness of a Mother, which springs from Passion, and is rooted in corporeal Nature, is the occasion of that Shock and inward Abhorrence. Hast thou not seen a Father chastise the Son he tenderly affects ; who, tho' ev'ry Lash the Son receives, most sensibly strikes himself, yet continues the Correction, and tho' he's afflicted at his Cries and Tears, is nevertheless the occasion of them ? How comes it to pass that he's pleas'd, and troubled at the same time ? It is because Reason (or the Superior part) sees it necessary for the Child's good that he shou'd be chastis'd ; whilst, at the same time, the Inferior or Sensitive part, is affected with motions of Tenderness, at its mournful Cries and Complaints.

So, *Philothea*, it happens to my Servants who carry their Cross after me ; the Superior Part, with Pleasure and Satisfaction beholds Eternal Happiness at the end of a well-spent Life ready to reward her ; whilst the Inferior is drawn to Obedience with Pain and Difficulty. The Soul rejoices,

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joices, in hopes to accomplish her Desire, which is to attain that inestimable Good which she evidently sees must make her truly happy, by reducing her Body to terms of Reason; but the Inferior part, naturally adhering to those material Objects which sooth and flatter the Senses, is not without Force and Violence hindered from yielding to 'em, and drawn to act conformably to Reason. Neither is it a Crime in my Servants to meet with this Opposition from the Corporeal part; provided the Soul is not in the end overcome by the frequent and violent Solicitations of the Sensitive Man: For this is to resist, combat, and vanquish, that they may be crown'd; and arrive, through Victory, at Enjoyment, and in Fruition meet an eternal and glorious Triumph.

These domestick Wars, *Philothea*, have constantly employ'd the Saints; and, what is more, I my self have combated, and overcome innumerable Temptations, as an Example to others, both how to resist, and how
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to vanquish in the like Occasions: I'll pass over many, and only mention my Agony in the Garden, when my Knowledge of all things represented to my Imagination, in a most lively manner, the barbarous Affronts, the ignominious Usage, the bloody Torments, and all the Cruelties that an insensible Rabble could invent, were ready to be inflicted on me. My Inferior part gave outward Symptoms, in a bloody Sweat, how sensibly the Imagination was affected with the Idea of my future Sufferings; whilst my Soul was in Tranquillity, and readily disposed to undergo the utmost Rigours of my Passion, and Death itself upon the Cross for the Salvation of Men. My Mother also, my disconsolate Mother, and Witness of my cruel Death, tho' she herself seem'd nail'd, as it were, to a Cross, when she beheld me crucify'd in so barbarous a fashion, yet her Soul was perfectly resign'd to the Will of my Eternal Father.

See'tt thou, *Philathea*, how to suffer, and to rejoice, are things consistent?

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stent? How the Sensitive or Inferior Man may be sad and afflicted, and the Rational and Superior Man, perfectly resign'd, and pleas'd? And how naturally the Body clings to the World, and is therefore difficultly induced to abandon it; whilst the Soul is delighted with the prospect of future Happiness, which is to be acquired by working up the whole Man to be truly Rational in all his Actions? See'st thou how 'tis possible for those followers of my Cross that weep, and sigh under their Burthen, as they travel up that Mountain, to adore and affectionately embrace that which is the cause of Pain to the sensitive Man?

And if thou art yet incredulous, *Philothea*, try to separate them from their Cross, endeavour to make 'em abandon it, and employ the most efficacious Arguments thou canst summon, to perswade 'em to lay it down; nay let utmost force be used to compel 'em to it, and thou'lt find 'em more ready to surrender up their Lives, than their Cross: For, as I

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refused to descend from mine, when my Enemies invited me to it, that they might believe in me ; as I prefer'd the Torments, they unjustly inflicted on me, to the relinquishing my Cross: And as I endured inconceivable Pains, Injuries and Persecutions, to try if I cou'd induce 'em, by so many, and so pressing Testimonies of my Love, to follow and believe me, so I wou'd not buy their Conversion and Belief by forsaking my Cross; (which I refused to do, for no other purpose, than that my future Church, or Faithful, shou'd not be discouraged from suffering by my quitting and abandoning my Cross, and lest, by so doing, more Souls shou'd perish afterwards than wou'd be saved at that time ; for if a few *Jews* had believ'd in me, upon my descending from the Cross, innumerable Christians wou'd leave me and lose themselves by forsaking it, after my Example.) So thou wou'dst find that all those who exactly pursue my Steps, crucify'd, to the World, like me, love, cherish, embrace, and

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and with great content, nail themselves, as it were, so firmly to the Cross they bear, that they wou'd more willingly part with Life, than it. For, tho' the Cross on which they suffer is a Punishment to the Sensitive Part, yet the Spiritual feels Pleasure, Satisfaction, and Content, of a surpassing Nature. In the Cross they meet with Consolation, Ease, Mirth, and a Sovereign Remedy for all their Infirmities, and an Antidote against the Poyson of Sin.

They encounter with *Mirth* ; for, pious Souls feel a certain Charm in acting suitably to their Spiritual Nature, that is, according to unprejudiced Reason, which prefers Me, as their supreme good, to all other things. 'Tis that which gives them a solid Joy and Pleasure in the midst of those Sufferings resented by the inferior part. They meet with *Consolation* ; for, the assurance of Eternal Happiness is a powerful Encouragement ; and, when their thoughts are fix'd on me nail'd to a Cross for their sakes, they are

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strengthened in their Resolution of loving me. They receive *Ease* and *Refreshment* from the Confidence they have in my Promise, to refresh and comfort all who, labouring to overcome their sinful Appetite, and endeavouring to master the heavy Burthen of their corrupt Nature, humbly, and heartily apply themselves to me. They are sensible that it expels the Venom of their Crimes; for the Poyson of Sin is the inducing your Superior Part to comply with the Inferior, and prefer the goods of this Life, to that which is natural to it, and for which it was ordain'd: And this Venom is perfectly expell'd by Pennance and Mortification. And, lastly, their Sufferings for my sake, raises their Love of me to that Pitch, that in it they find an Antidote against the bewitching Allurements of this World.

But thou, *Philothea*, beholdest the Exterior Sorrow of those who walk with or suffer on a Cross express'd in Tears; but see'st not their Interior Consolation. Thou hear'st the Sighs,

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Sighs, which Grief sends from their Breasts; but not those of Love which issue from the Soul enamour'd of my infinite Goodness. Thy Eyes discover their Outward trouble, but never penetrate their Inward Satisfaction.

Believe me, *Philothea*, if the Pleasure of the Soul excell'd not the Pains of their Body; the Soul wou'd soon yield it self to the sensual Pleasures of the Body: And, if the Sensitive Man cou'd prevail against the Strength of Reason, assisted with my Grace, thou wou'dst quickly see the Soul and Body mutually agreed to abandon both my Cross and Me.

To the end you may know whether Grief or Joy has the greatest share in their Breasts; take notice of the Exterior, and, from thence, take thy measures of the Interior: For, if thou rightly observest their Actions, thou may'st in them form a true Judgment of their real Sentiments; and, whilst thou behold'st their Pains, thou may'st at the same time evidently see the vigour of their active Love.

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See'st thou not how they walk in Torment, and almost dissolved to Tears; yet closely embrace their Cross, and with an invincible Resolution continue their endeavours to overcome the Difficulties of the craggy Steep, pleased with the Expectation of Eternal Glory if they persevere to the end? The vigorous forcing their Passage through all Obstacles, and their contempt of the deluding World, strongly and evidently argue a firm Love of Heaven, and an assured hope of attaining it; and the more both these are settled in their Soul, the more they are enabled to vanquish the Pain and Troubles of the way.

'Tis true, *Philotea*, they sigh and weep, almost incessantly, as they travel on; but who, inconsiderate Maid, has misinform'd thee, that Grief and Pain are the Two Sources that give issue to their Tears? Who has abused thee into a Belief that those Sighs are born of the Pains inflicted on the Body by the overburthened Cross? Thou, like a feeble

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Chappel of the Cross. 125

Woman, art sensibly touch'd at this, because thou wou'dst act according to thy Misbelief; But know, *Philothea*, that their Tears, and Sighs flow from a sublimer Cause.

Those Tears of him that ascends, weeping, and bemoaning himself, which thou imaginest to be shed out of Pain, are only pour'd out, to bewail his former Follies; and he is much more afflicted at his Offences, than at the weight of his Cross; the Consideration of the heavy Torments which I suffer'd for his Redemption, makes a deeper Impression on his Soul, than all the troubles he undergoes in following me. The Tears of that other who weeps so movingly, pursuing his way with Courage, and sealing a Thousand affectionate Kisses on his Cross, lament his having taken it so late, and he passionately cries for Joy to see himself so agreeably fasten'd to it, and walk in a way so sweet and easie in it self, and so glorious in the end: for he is now arrived at the happy State wherein the overflowing
Plea-

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Pleasures of the Soul communicate
their Streams to the Body.

He whom thou beholdest drown'd
in Tears, with his Face enkindled
like a flaming Seraphin, which thou
supposest to spring from Grief, and
his being weary with the Burthen of
the Cross, is inflam'd with no other
Fire than an Ardent Charity, Con-
tent, and Joy, that swell the teem-
ing Soul with ravishing Delights,
derryed from the Fruition of my
Love, for which he's indebted to
the Cross: And Love, not being able
to be contain'd within the narrow
limits of the Soul, appears with all
its Charms upon his Seraphick Face;
and, sparkling through his Eyes,
dissolves it self into warm Tears.

Those Sobs and Sighs thou hear'st
torn from the Breasts of my Two
Servants who so mournfully prose-
cute their Journey, as if they were
the effect of some excessive Pain;
are but the flashes of Fire discharged
from the Heart burning with my
Love. O deluded *Philothea*, who
entertain'st such mean, and abject
thoughts

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thoughts of the sublime Mystery of the Cross! O! if thou didst but know the Satisfaction, Pleasure, Joy, Comfort, and Delight, that lie conceal'd in quitting the World for my sake, how readily wou'dst thou abandon all and follow me?

C H A P. XV.

Philothea persists in her distrust of the Pleasure annex'd to the Cross: Our Saviour explains it in a clear, natural, and easie Discourse.

MY Lord, said Philothea, all this Joy, Pleasure, and Delight, which you represent to me, is the mere effect of your holy Grace and Spirit; those Sighs, 'tis true, are flashes of divine Love, and those Tears of Joy spring from the Assistance which you are pleased to give: Which no doubt is sufficient to change Sadness into Mirth, and Pain to Pleasure. But, amongst Men, who is there can merit so great a Blessing?

Peradventure can I, and such miserable Wretches as my self foster so presumptuous Hopes? Moreover, the Grace which you, my Lord, may bestow on us, who have not yet set foot in this difficult way, is a Blessing we may hope for when advanc'd to the number of your Favourites; but, in the mean time, we are sure to find Pain and Trouble: The suffering part is visible to us; but to carry the Cross, yet feel none of its weight through the assistance of your holy Grace, is a favour permitted us I confess, to desire, but which we dare not presume to expect will happen to us. And this obliges me to ballance its weight with my Abilities, before I take it up; least precipitately undertaking an Enterprize disproportion'd to my Strength, I be forc'd to quit with Shame and Discredit, what I attempted with Rashness and Presumption.

You, my Sovereign, have taught us to ponder and examine Difficulties, before we embarque in the Undertaking; lest when we are engaged

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Chappel of the Cross. 129

ged too far, we be not able to retreat with Honour. 'Tis your advice not to begin a Building we can't finish : You have told us that 'tis folly to go about the building a Castle, without being able to carry it above the Foundation : That we ought not to build upon the Sand, but upon firm and solid Stone : And that we ought to take a List of our Forces, and measure our Strength with our Enemies before we advance to Battle ; and when we have duly weigh'd and examin'd all Circumstances, and taken all necessary Precautions, then to execute warily what we had wisely resolved upon. This Counsel, my Lord, is what I endeavour to follow in this important Affair of mine ; to the end I may not repent my Undertaking, and ignominiously abandon an Enterprize too imprudently taken in Hand.

'Tis true, *Philothea*, reply'd our *Saviour*, I wou'd not have you act temerariouſly ; and 'tis certainly agreeable to Reason, and the Principles

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ples of a pious Soul, to put your Strength in Ballance with the Load, ere you take it upon you: But know withal, that there are two ways of following me, one *yours*, the other *mine*. When you follow me, inspir'd by Presumption, or some Humane Consideration, 'tis good to look before you, to consider, and deliberate with your self upon the action you intend; and, when enter'd on, to proceed warily, to be careful, timorous and apprehensive of Dangers; and the reason is because you act out of Humour, Fancy, or some motive, that in it self, is not very warrantable: And it much more concerns you to employ your Caution when you are about compassing any difficult Design in Politicks, Morals, or any other Temporal Affair.

And 'tis of greatest Importance to use your utmost Diligence in taking a faithful Account of your Offences committed against me; to examine well what you do, to know if you are in a Condition to stand
your

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your last Tryal, and abide the Sentence that will be pronounced according to your Merits or Demerits. Take care *Philothea*, you carry not so great a Burthen of Sins about you as will o'rwhelm you with their weight, precipitate you into an Abyss of Miseries, and inflict upon you a Thousand cruel and insufferable Pains, of such a killing Nature, as wou'd give as many Deaths if you were capable of receiving any. This burthen, *Philothea*, is much more dangerous and heavy than that of my Cross, and it extreamly concerns you to look how you engage in the Enterprise.

But when I affectionately call and seek thee, when thou pursu'st what is good, and holy, *inviuon'd with my divine Light*, which plainly shews thee, that to be fully and compleatly happy, thou must love me above all things; *when I govern and direct thy Steps*; thou ought'st not to amuse thy self about Formalities, to make such tedious Demurs, to delay so long, and obey with such Regret.

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When thou know'st it is I who call upon thee, why start'st thou back so timorously? If by the means of the Cross I induce thee to observe my Precepts; why waver'st thou so irresolutely in thy Obedience? If I command, and advise thee, why expostulatest thou with me, and reply'st with Arguments that have no more real weight, than thou hast true Affection for my Cross? Have I ever invited any to the Kingdom of Heaven, without an Intention to crown his Labour, and make him happy with my Enjoyment, and the Possession of Everlasting Glory? Yet thou slowly advancest forward, numbring as 'twere thy Steps, and meditating with thy self, which is best; to follow, or to leave me, to carry my Cross, or let it alone. Wilt thou disobey my Call, and go in search of a different way from that to which thou art directed by him who is *Life, Truth, and the Way*? So many Answers retorted for an Obligation which thou ought'st gratefully to acknowledge; so many

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repeated Doubts objected against a Benefit so clear and evident!

I say not this, my Lord, answer'd *Philothea*, neither do I offer these doubts, to the end I may decline the imitating your holy Example; but that I may so closely follow it, as never to be separated from you: And this, my God, is the very Essence of Love. You have told me that your way is strew'd with Joys and Pleasures, and that your Cross is sweet and delightful; on this condition I cou'd perswade my Weakness to endure the way, and, especially, if you convinc'd me that the Pleasures of the World were painful and dissatisfactory: To confirm me more, and that I may fix my choice without any scruple, I desire to see evidently the Conveniencies that attend it. This I humbly intreat, that I may adhere to you inseparably; that I may labour with greater Satisfaction in chusing the way of the Cross; and, by this means, serve and follow you with Delight, and Joy.

Well

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Well then, *Philothea*, said our Saviour, I'll condescend to enlighten thy understanding ; tho' I'm wholly disengaged from any Obligation to favour thee so much, and have a mind that thou shou'dst stand indebted to my Patience for thy better Instruction. Know therefore that the Sweetness, and Pleasure of the way of the Cross (which is represented to thy Imagination in a terrifying *Idea*) proceeds from the Cross it self ; insomuch as in that very thing in which thou contempest matter of Grief and Affliction, dwells Ease and Pleasure.

That thou may'st comprehend my meaning, observe, that the Cross is the very overcoming the World, and your own corrupt Nature for my sake ; it gives a prospect of future Happiness to be certainly enjoy'd in the Eternal Possession of that supreme Good, for which you were created, which makes my Servants find Pleasure in the midst of Contradictions : And willingly strive to
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conquer the exorbitant Suggestions and Importunities of the Sensitive Part, and to bring it to the Obedience of Reason height'nd by my Grace.

And thus it comes to pass, that Mortification is a Pleasure; that subduing the unlawful Appetite is a Satisfaction, that they find Sweetness in despising and resisting the Temptations of the flattering World, and that the Burthen of the Cross is light and easie, whilst the Love of an Object infinitely more amiable, carries them to it with most ravishing Content, and most Transporting Joy.

CHAP.

Philothea entreats our Saviour to declare some of those Effects of the Cross that cause Joy in the Soul. He complies with her Request.

P*hilothea*, hearing that the Cross introduced Mirth, Joy, and Pleasure into afflicted Souls, I'm not only desirous, my Lord, said she, to follow the Cross, but to carry it after you; yet 'twill be impossible for me to do so, if it is bitter, and disgustful in effect: Explain therefore, I beseech you, those Effects of Joy and Pleasure which it produces, that I may bear the Cross with Pleasure and Delight.

The first effect of the Cross, reply'd our *Saviour*, is to represent, on one Hand, the desperate Condition of a Soul buried in Sin; and, on the other, the happy State of one that's truly Penitent; which creates in her a real horror of the Danger with which she's evidently threatn'd,
and

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and a strong desire to be in Security from this dreadful Mischief: This puts her upon using proper Remedies to cure the sinful State that troubles her present, and endangers her future Repose; and to attain that happy one, experienc'd by those whom a true Repentance has restor'd to Innocence.

See'st thou not the unfeign'd Pleasure of those, who, with a sincere Grief and Penitence, wipe out their Sins by a general Confession of their Faults? See'st thou not the Joy that agreeably sweetens the Affliction of the most despairing, and forsaken Soul; when, disabus'd, by the vanishing of false illusions that veil'd her Eyes, she beholds Me encompass'd with clear and undeceiving Light, and finds me merciful and clement? See'st thou not his undisturb'd Serenity of Mind, who, (by Penitence and Confession, having eas'd himself of the weighty and noisom Burthen of his Sins, and immediately after an humble Communion discharging his Soul of whatsoever

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was odious and deform'd) is restored to my Grace? *Clean Attire, Philothea, is a Refreshment to the Body, and Retriev'd Innocence, is a Robe that alleviates, comforts, and rejoices the Soul.*

Consider the Content a Man finds, as soon as he has unburthen'd himself of a most heavy Load; such and greater is the contentful Ease that pleasantly refreshes a Sinner, as soon as, with the Cross of Sorrow and Contrition, he has eas'd his mind of the intolerable weight of his Enormities, releas'd himself from the Yoak of his Tyrannical Passions, and cast of the heavy Affliction that waits on a tedious Life unfortunately spun out in my Disgrace.

The second effect of the Cross, is to banish from the Soul those importunate Desires that disturb her Tranquillity; for, how difficult soever it is, in your Opinion, for her to raise her Love from what is Earthly to what is Divine, yet, since 'tis an Object too base, and unworthy of a rational Being, and nothing consistent

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stent with the end for which it was created, 'tis not possible the Soul should find repose till I become the object of her Affection. All Creatures, but Man, regularly pursue the end for which they were ordain'd, they become restless if they miss, or deviate from it; and the very *Medicines* that lead to the end are disquieted and suffer Violence, if not proportion'd to what they are intended by the order of Nature.

From this Fountain stream the Inquietudes of Men, in this sinful Life; hence flows the Insatiableness of worldly Desires that continually molest the Soul, the end of whose Creation was my Enjoyment to be acquired by despoiling her self of earthly Affections, and promoting her Desires of Heaven. This is the Womb in which is conceived the Insatiable Nature of the Rich, Fortunate, and Eminent Personages, whose restless Desires hurry them in the endeavour of rising to the highest Dignities; which when they have attain'd, they find themselves
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yet uneasie, and are disquieted either with new Desires, tired with the Fatigue annex'd to the Honour they have reach'd; or else they are assaulted with the fear of losing, or perplex'd with the Cares of preserving it.

Hence also spring the most grievous Pains that afflict the Damn'd; for, as those Souls were created to enjoy me for ever, as their utmost Happiness; so now, by misapplying their Affections here, they lie tortur'd in Hell, with the racking Pains of having eternally lost the End for which they were created: Which they evidently, but too late, see was the only thing they ought to have desired.

But my Cross, *Philothea*, prevents this irreparable Mischief, by a timely Banishment of those Desires, and the Appetite to temporal Felicities; submitting her self in all things to my Will and Pleasure: It quiets the Passions that disturb the Mind, and disposes the Brutal Man to obey the

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Rational, and by this means it gives Birth to Joy and Consolation. As a Bone disjointed, pains and torments a Person till it is *well set*; so the Soul is indisposed and ill at Ease, whilst her Desires are *misplaced* upon the World; and she is in perfect Health when Heaven becomes her Object. A Soul separated from Me, is toss'd upon the stormy Waves of repeated Misfortunes; but, united to Me, she safely Anchors in the Haven of an untroubled Peace.

The third effect of the Cross, is to fill the Soul with Joy; for those degenerate Affections, that brood upon the Earth, and hover about the World with its train of Vanities, always prey upon Objects that are absent, since Desires run in chace of Possession: And are rightly intitled, *Rude and turbulent Pretenders, that entangle a Soul in perpetual Broils, by their confused and disorderly Strife for the Enjoyment of their passionately coveted Objects*: From which Seeds, rooted in the Inferior Man, (the number of which is multiply'd in Proportion
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to the several Objects of that infinite variety of Passions, I say infinite, for there's hardly a pleasing Object that presents it self, which rouses not your Appetite) sprout up inward Diffensions, and such a Headstrong and untamed Melancholy as makes a Man become an insupportable Burthen to himself.

Consider a Hedghog arm'd with all his Prickles rowling up and down within thy Breast: think thy Heart closely embraced on all sides with Thorns, or whipp'd with Nettles: And imagine thou saw'st a Multitude of Fools and Mad-men fast lock'd in a dark but narrow Room, (ev'ry one being refused the thing he most desired,) with what hideous Cries and Roars wou'd the Place resound, with what furious and desperate Actions wou'd they not attempt upon themselves, or upon each other? Such, and in some Men, far more dismal effects are wrought by the Unbridled, and Enraged Desires of the Soul.

To

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To compose these intestine Jars and Disorders, my Cross is a most effectual Remedy ; it chaces away the foolish and distracted Multitude, roots up the Brambles and tormenting Nettles (planting, in their stead, sweet Flowers, and sov'raign Herbs:) and, which is matter of greatest Difficulty, restores those mutinous and frantick Spirits to themselves ; makes them see what folly 'tis to covet what's in another's Power ; and what Madness 'tis to run in pursuit of a temporal Good, and avoid the Advantage which may be reap'd by confining their Desires to the Possession of a Good that's Everlasting. The Soul, by this means, discovering the Snares laid for her by the deceitful World, in Conjunction with her second self, the Flesh ; is induced to relinquish Appearances, and embrace Truth ; and, the Mists, rais'd by Passion and by her own corrupt Nature to cloud her Reason, being dispell'd, she finds her self environ'd with an unwonted Lustre diffused on all sides ; which

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evidently makes appear that her sole Happiness consists in loving *Me*, preferably to the Enchanting World. At length she's insensibly won, by the Charms of a peaceable and quiet Mind, to yield her self wholly up to *Me*; where she finds her self entirely at ease, and a growing Pleasure heightn'd with the Expectation of a clear beatifical Vision of my Glory. So those Demoniacs whom I dispossest'd of evil Spirits, being sensible of an inward Tranquility with which they had not been acquainted, cast themselves at my Feet ravish'd with Joy and Pleasure.

The fourth effect of the Cross, turns on the same Hinge with the former, and consists in the Enjoyment of that smooth and even Tranquillity to which the Soul is restored by her nearer approach to *Me*; for, the farther she wanders from me, the more Pain she feels, the greater Misery she endures, embroild in temporal Affairs, Contests, and disgustful Encounters: and, like a disjointed

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jointed Bone, is never at ease till she return back to me again.

The cause of these Disorders are the frequent contrariety of the untamed Appetites. Daily Experience manifests how unsettled the temper of those Men is, who lay Pretensions to a thing, which they, at the same time, are afraid to meddle with ; detesting what they enjoy, and embracing what they detest ; in love with the Object their Desires prompt them to, and cloy'd with its Fruition : And, sometimes, they are scarce warm in the Possession of what they pretended to, ere it becomes Burthensom and Distastful. And if a Man is free from these domestick Feuds and Differences, he's presently engaged in a foreign War, and invades his Neighbour's Right ; for the Desires are of an *Unconfined* and *Bundless Nature*, never satisfy'd, and always in want : If they fall short of attaining what they aim at, they immediately grow Disgusted ; which blows the Fire of Rage into a Flame that bursts into rude Clamour,

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mours, and a furious War. The Appetite is the Seat and Nursery of these unruly Tumults, and is perpetually involved in Hatreds, Factions, Quarrels, and mutual Dissentions. My Cross lays the Demon of this boisterous Tempest, by *regulating* the Desires, and gently *calming* the Inferior Part; which disposes the Body to receive the Laws of Reason, and consequently become resign'd to the conduct of my Holy Spirit, which ever after guides the Soul in all things with infinite Pleasure and Delight.

C H A P. XVII.

Our Saviour adds three other Effects of the Cross to pacifie the Soul, and illustrates them with some Examples.

BESIDES these Effects, pursued our Saviour, the Virtue of the Cross makes three others to bloom in the Soul. The first is to appease
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and quiet those civil Discords, not only by taking away the Root of War which the Desires wage against each other, and that which they carry into other Places; but by cooling that Ardour which transports the Soul to combat against her only Good and Interest: For a Man deeply engaged in Sin, carries about him a remorse of his guilt that perpetually accuses him at the Bar of Reason, which he esteems no other than a Spy to overlook his Actions. Thus he leads a disconsolate Life, and finds within himself a perpetual Remembrancer of his Crimes, that are always crying, and demanding Justice against him; he's always sensible of the Worm that reproaches and gnaws his guilty Conscience; and, like a bloody Executioner, whom no compassionate Object can soften into Clemency, tortures him with an unexampled Cruelty.

But my Grace, usher'd in by the Cross, gives a happy Period to all Remorse, destroys the Worm of Conscience, and those in-bred Fu-

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ries caus'd by Sin ; there remains no inward Strife, no irregular Desires, but a general Peace and Tranquillity diffuses it self through the whole Man ; who now delightfully pursues his way to that Supreme Good, with whose Contemplation he's infinitely enamour'd, and finds to be infinitely more amiable than he's able to conceive, and that the Possession of it is therefore infinitely to be desired, and preferr'd to all other things.

The second effect that shoots from the Cross, is to allay those fearful Apprehensions of the Soul for having offended the Divine Majesty : She knows, but too well, that by adhering to the World, and the Suggestion of her Carnal Nature, she has forsaken Me, and can imagine nothing less than that I'm displeas'd with her ; I who am to be her Judg, from whom she can expect no favour, and from whom she can conceal nothing : And therefore her guilty Conscience perpetually represents me to her Imagination (in spite

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spite of all the Resistance she can make) in the quality of a Just and All-knowing Judge; to which is added the afflicting Idea of those Pains she expects as a due Recompence of her Offences, which haunt her in most terrifying Shapes, and persecute her so assiduously, that she with reason imagines her self already burning in the Flames of Hell: Nay, if she rightly considers her Condition (and, if she does not, she's in the worst Condition of all) she moves not a step in the way of worldly Pleasure (however satisfy'd she may appear to others) without being inwardly crucify'd and tormented with a Thousand Fears.

My Cross, as I have already said, allays these dreadful Apprehensions, and perfectly reconciles the Soul to my Love and Favour. A penitent Heart is all that I require, my Arms are always open to receive a contrite Sinner, and afford him all necessary Consolation, and Encouragement in his Endeavours to be forever happy.

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Lastly,

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Laſtly, *Philothea*, amongſt other innumerable effects of the Croſs (which create Joy, Mirth, and Gladneſs in the Soul) it expels that Obſtinacy and Hardneſs of Heart contracted through an inveterate habit to Sin; and cures all thoſe remaining Obſtacles to Virtue, which oppoſe the entire Conqueſt over her corrupt Nature, and endeavour to withdraw her into her wonted vicious Life: For, as long as a Man impiouſly foments Vice, and ſins away his Life; he wears out ſo many Days protracted to a miſerable length, beſieg'd with all thoſe terrifying Dangers I mention'd; the Senſe of which ſo totally poſſeſſes the Faculties of his wounded Soul, as, like a Madman, he deſperately ruſheth forward ſtill into the dangerous Conſequences of Evil. My Croſs heals this Obſtinacy by vertue of the Lenitives which it brings; and, by gentle ſuffering for my ſake, ſoftens by degrees that rugged Diſpoſition ſettled in corrupt Nature; when this Remedy has been ſometime apply'd, the Soul

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Soul begins to feel a new and lively warmth dilate its fiery Parts, and a youthful Spring of Serenity and Peace vanquish her former Stubbornness : Which at length brings her to render her self entirely to the Charms of my Love, where (ravish'd with the Delights of Tranquillity and an undisturb'd Repose) she is wholly dissolved into Desires of being for ever united to the infinite Being that made her.

The truth of what I have said, *Philothea*, may be seen in two illustrious Persons. Consider the first of Men in the blushing dawn of his yet infant Felicity, accompanied with all those Graces that adorn'd his Person ; view, but with amazement view, the harmonious Proportion of that admirable Structure built for the Mansion of a Soul miraculously beautiful, without the least defect or blemish, and which was the fair Image, and perfect Resemblance of her Creator : Behold a little Republick supported on the Basis of Virtue, fashion'd after an in-

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comparable Idea, and managed by untainted Reason; and see with wonder, the many Blessings that from my lavish Bounty were pour'd upon him. He was a Stranger to the least irregular Appetite, and knew no rebellious part about him. Qualified after this extraordinary manner, he was placed in Paradise, receiving homage from the Elements, and the most Savage Creatures; enjoying no less a Paradise within himself of a perfect Tranquillity in Mind and Body. *In fine*, the many Favours bestow'd on *Adam* were the earliest Fruits of those Blessings with which I have at any time, graced the Souls of his succeeding Progeny.

But see the change of this glorious Scene, behold this happy Man, precipitated from his Throne and Lordship over Creatures, into a scornful Servitude; divested of his Robes of Innocence, and Joy, and cloath'd in the Rags of Sadness and Affliction. Consider him banish'd, turn'd Fugitive, and a restless Vagabond; neither

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ther Elements nor Creatures any longer yielding respect to a Man, subjected, through his own fault, to the tyranny of his Appetite. Consider him thrown out of Paradise into a Soil, fruitful in nothing but Thorns, Labour, and Miseries; press'd with the Rigours of hard Necessity, and with never ceasing Tears deploring the loss of that great, but irrecoverable Happiness, which he, in a Moment forfeited by Sin.

Reflect on *David* in his innocent Years; such was his spotless Sanctity, as we became mutually enamour'd of each other; and his Bosom was the Cabinet in which I treasur'd up a Thousand Excellencies; his Love-inspired Soul breath'd it self out in my Praises, and those passionate Airs which my whole Church at this Day sings: He was of an almost invincible Courage; Giants, Lions, and whatsoever was most formidable amongst Men or Beasts, yielded to his Valour, because he knew how to conquer his rebellious self, and

had

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had taught his unruly Passions to obey the Commands of Reason.

See him again, but quite changed from what he was before, besmear'd all o're with Sin, guilty of a double Murther, first in stabbing the Honour of his faithful *Urias*, by the injury done to his Bed ; and, afterwards (to compleat his Crime) in sacrificing his Life to his lustful Pleasure : Both which conduced to gain him the Hatred of his Subjects, and his Sons revolt from Duty and Allegiance. But now this victorious King, intimidated by his Crimes, shamefully flies away, suffering the foulest Ignominy and Reproach that ever King was sensible of ; his Concubines abused in the open Day, and, almost, in the face of all the World, by his disloyal darling Son.

Look on these Two potent Monarchs, washing away the tainture of their Sins with whole Rivers of penitential Tears, which re-establish them in my Favour, and their Thrones ; insomuch that I promis'd, my self, to become a Branch of their
Stock :

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Stock : Such, *Philothea*, is the force of Tears that spring from a Sincere Contrition, and so stupendious are the Miracles wrought by the Cross, which thou so obstinately opposest.

C H A P. XVIII.

Philothea beseeches the Divine Majesty, that, besides the effects of the Cross already declared, he wou'd vouchsafe to explain the Conveniency, and Motives to embrace it. He satisfies her Desire.

MY Lord, said *Philothea*, I'm perswaded that the Cross refreshes, easeth, comforts, and disengages our Minds from the throng of worldly Cares and Sollicitudes, which are agreeable Perplexities to those who love Business : And I not only believe it because I reverence your holy Word as an Oracle that's infallible, but because you have clearly manifested the truth of it to me.

Yet

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Yet, besides this, I humbly desire to know the usefulness of the *way*, and for what end I shou'd undertake the Cross.

This way, my Lord, is to me like an unknown Country, and a thing with which I have no acquaintance; a new Exercise requires new Lessons, and a new Employment stands in need of fresh Instructions: I therefore humbly beseech your Divine Majesty wou'd be pleas'd to tell me in what manner I ought to behave myself in the difficulty I'm about to enterprize. Let not my Mistakes provoke you to fresh Displeasure; 'tis much better to be arm'd with Instructions ere we begin this Journey, than ignorantly to attempt it; and 'tis more advisable to be assured of the right, than to err for want of being taught.

Practise, reply'd our Saviour, will more plainly unveil the Mystery of the Cross, than the most full and ample Instructions; for it requires more Practice than Speculation, and Action more than Words. Thou hadst

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hadst satisfy'd thy Knowledg, if this time (trifled away in cold Interrogations) had been employ'd in following Me. Be then no longer obstinate, *Philothea*, against such convincing Light; live strong in Faith, and let thy Discourse resign its place to Execution.

Pity, O God, said *Philothea*, the feebleness of your Servant; for tho' I'm convinced, and undoubtedly certain of the Sweetness that accompanies your Cross; and tho' I see, may almost grasp, this Truth, yet, Pains, and Sufferings (the cruel Attendants on this rigorous way) have so intimidated my cowardly Nature, that I find an absolute necessity of a greater Light: Neither will this suffice, unless you strengthen me with the fervour of your Holy Spirit; for I'm chill'd with fear, least my impertinent Questions shou'd only serve to protract the time which I ought to dedicate to carry your Cross. For which purpose I implore your Mercy to make me acquainted with some such Motives as may inspire

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spire me to run with open Arms to embrace it with a never-dying Affection.

The Motives to take up my Cross, reply'd our *Saviour*, are very advantageous in this Life, and in the next turn to Glorious Crowns, and Undecaying Felicities: Their Inequality or Subordination in Worth and Sanctity makes them live in a peaceful Union, free from contesting with, or rivalling each other.

One of the Motives, *Philothea*, that invite Men to bear my Cross, is the unavoidable Necessity which they see lies upon 'em to undergo Pains and Difficulties in this mortal Life, which are derived from the primitive Corruption of their Nature by Original Sin; and as they are born with them, so they part not from 'em till Death. Since they evidently see that Sufferings are entail'd upon the whole Race of *Adam* during their Life-time here, and will be worse hereafter if not timely prevented; and, on the other hand, being satisfy'd that they may
be

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be for ever happy by, only, changing the Nature of their Sufferings on Earth: They take a Resolution to make a Virtue of Necessity, and suffer for my sake in order to future Happiness, rather than suffer, in the pursuit of their dissatisfying Pleasures, to be eternally miserable.

And this Motive, *Philothea*, is very prevailing with some Persons, whose happy Circumstances and Disposition, make them seriously reflect on the Miseries and Troubles, that are natural to humane Life and Conversation, and generally befall Mankind, what rank soever they hold in the World: They see and consider that Passion, for the most part, rules the Actions of Men; that *Pride*, *Ambition*, *Avarice*, *Luxury*, *Revenge*, &c. are the Springs that set 'em in Motion, and carry them into a Thousand Extravagancies, through a World of Crosses, and as many Difficulties. This view of what happens to others, gives 'em a profitable occasion to look into themselves, where

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where they also encounter Inclinations little different from those they observed in others ; but, reflecting further whether these headstrong Passions will lead, and how they'd finally terminate , they find that here, they, not only lose their time which requires a diligent Improvement, but they engage them in Troubles and Afflictions, which will be multiply'd in the future State, in case Death should snatch 'em away with their Minds bent upon the World. These thoughts by degrees make such Impression, as to become Motives of their Conversion from Sin, to take up the Cross, and undergo any Pains in this mortal State, to attain immortal Ease and Happiness.

The second Motive to carry your Cross with Joy and Pleasure, and gladly support Troubles and Afflictions for my sake, is the Consideration that Heaven is to be the Reward of those Sufferings ; and, that Sin is of so black a Nature, as to merit Eternal Pains for its Punishment ;

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ment; which yet, through my boundless Mercy, may be atton'd for on Earth, by enduring Temporal Pains for my sake. And 'tis no flight Effect of my Goodness to grant that the heavy doom of Perpetual Torments may be changed into Transitory Afflictions.

Shou'd a Man who is condemn'd to lose his Head on a Scaffold, have the Sentence revers'd, and changed into that of Six Days Imprisonment; he wou'd, doubtless, be extreamly pleas'd with his Suffering for that space of time, in hopes to enjoy his Liberty once more: And (seeing the busie instants Labour, as 'twere, for his Releasment, by their speedy Motion, tho' the last wou'd be received with the most endearing Welcom, yet) each hasty Minute wou'd cast fresh Fewel on his growing Joy. So ought you with Pleasure embrace your short-lived Pains, your Sufferings, and the Cross, since every Moment, so employ'd, adds new Feathers to fledge you for a Glorious Eternity. *No pain is counted great, that's short; and if*
the

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the Soul scarce feels what 'tis to suffer ere the suffering dies, and this momentary Pain ends in a perpetuity of Bliss; what icy fear can freeze that sacred Heat, which ought to make you burn with longing for those advantageous Pains endured on the short and flying Vespers of Eternity's long Day? In this case the wise and discreet Repriev'd, looks not on his Sufferings, but on the Pleasures that feed his swelling hopes; neither does he regard the Severity of his Chastisement; but ties fast his looks, beyond the hindrance of Distraction, to the dazzling Splendor of the Celestial Crown, that's ready to impale his Temples.

The third Motive is the Knowledge that *Heaven* must be gain'd by your *utmost* Endeavours, and the reasonableness of it; since, even in humane Affairs, nothing is acquirable without Industry, and the use of *Means* suitable to the *Design*. You see the Husbandman in due season manures and sows his Ground; knowing that from uncultivated Earth,

'tis

Chappel of the Crofs. 163

'tis impossible to reap an harvest :
The Merchant is assiduous in his
Traffick, that he may arrive at the
wealthy end of his Desires ; and the
Traveller pursues his way with many
a weary Step, in hopes to meet with
Ease and Satisfaction at his Journeys
end.

It also imports you to labour, and
take pains chearfully in the way of
the Crofs, to the end you may attain
your utmost Happiness; for 'tis impos-
sible you shou'd tame the Licentious-
ness of Concupiscence, curb your
wild Appetite, or repress the Rebel-
lion of your Sensitive Nature, with-
out the Assistance of my Crofs :
Neither can the Superior Part, with-
out its succour, acquire any Com-
mand or Power over the Inferior.
He who will conquer, must first haz-
zard a Battle, and be a Conqueror
before he triumphs. 'Tis evident
that if the Kingdom of Heaven is to
be won by *Storm*, and *Violence*, the
most effectual means to accomplish
it, is by carrying the Crofs, or,
using Violence upon your stubborn
Na-

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Nature, compelling your selves to love your Greatest Good instead of doating upon Dirt and Trifles. The Traveller to Heaven must walk in this only Way to Salvation, if he purposes to arrive at the happy End of his short, tho', laborious, Journey.

To vanquish your in-bred Foes, *Philothea*, without fighting against them, and to triumph for ever without obtaining the Victory, involve Impossibilities. 'Tis an establish'd Maxim, that he who loves the End, affectionately embraces the Means that conduct to it: The Ultimate End of Men is Eternal Glory, the Steps that lift them to that Throne, are Mortifications of the Body, in order to establish a perfect Love of Me in their Hearts; he loves not the End who refuses the Means of attaining it; nor does he love Glory, who will not be conducted to it by my Cross.

The fourth Motive is to make your Body obedient to Reason, not only for the sake of future Happiness, but that you may not be for ever
but

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ruin'd by losing Me. Shou'd the way of the Cross lead to endless Felicity through the most bitter Afflictions, 'twou'd be a Motive sufficiently obliging you to endure them: But 'tis back'd with this other pressing Consideration, that to be eternally happy, or eternally miserable are two Extremes without a Medium, for he who does not enjoy Me for ever suffers everlastingly.

One of these so distant Extremes must necessarily give the last stop to humane Life; after which will unavoidably succeed an Eternity of Heaven or Hell, of Pleasure, or Torments. Ev'ry one must chuse his future State whilst he lives on Earth, and determine himself to his well or ill being for ever. Pitch not rashly on the way thou takest, for there's no *Medium* to invite thy Choice; nor is't possible a *Third* way shou'd be obtain'd. Carriest thou my Cross, *Philothea*, in Tribulation, Pain, and in my Service? An everlasting Crown of Glory shall recompense thy Labour. Suffer'st thou

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thou without one, in the vain Amusements of the World ? The endless Miseries of Hell will be thy Portion, throughout all the Days of Eternity.

Hence results that the way of the Cross is the more indispensably necessary, because Hope and Fear oblige you to it ; Hope of endless Felicities if you pursue it, and the Fear of Eternal Damnation if you pursue it not. Shou'd a Man have the choice of a Loaf of Bread, or an Ox, of Reward, or Punishment, of a rich Diadem, or cruel Torments ; wou'd not he prefer the Diadem, to the never expiring Age of Sufferings ?

Thus, *Philothea*, to pursue the way of the Cross, is to lay hold on a Crown ; and to go in that of Delights, Pleasure, and Recreations, is to chuse Eternal Pain, and Torment. The sick Man takes the bitter Physick that he may escape Death ; and (as 'tis found in this miserable Life) less Pains become desirable, when they are conducive to avoid greater.

And

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And shou'd not you chuse to suffer and be afflicted in this World for my sake, to the end you may prevent suffering eternally hereafter? Ought you not to prefer Temporal Afflictions with my Cross, to Everlasting ones without it?

C H A P. XIX.

Our Saviour alledges other signal Motives to embrace his Cross, and follow his unerring way.

THE Fifth Motive to follow my Cross, said our Saviour, continuing his Discourse, is to expiate your Sins in this transitory World; because if you don't pay that Debt here, you'll be necessitated either to endure the everlasting Pains of Hell, or those of Purgatory, till such time as you have paid the utmost Farthing.

For you must know, *Philathea*, that the Disposition which qualifies a Soul to pass immediately from this Life,
to

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to Eternal Happiness ; is her total Conversion to me as her *only* Good and Supreme Felicity, perfectly refined from all Affections, and Hankerings after the Goods of this World: A Soul separated from her Body, in such a State and Condition, is instantly and inseparably united to the Sovereign Good which she so ardently loved, and solicitously desired. But, those Souls who are totally converted to the World, and give themselves entirely up to it, do depart this Life into a State of Eternal Misery ; for ever desiring their former Pleasures, which are become impossible to be had ; and now perfectly seeing an infinite Good incomparably beyond those they loved, which yet is impossible to be attain'd, through their being entirely prepossess'd with a doating Affection to a perishable (and, to them, now perish'd) Delights, they have lost all Good whatsoever, whence they have lost utterly all the Objects they could possibly desire, and have their *Will* (whose Na-
ture

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ture it is to affect some good or other, perpetually crost, which must necessarily breed intolerable Anguish and Misery ; all pleasure, whether little or great, consisting wholly in the Enjoying some kind or some sort of Good ; whereas they are not capable of enjoying any at all, being indisposed for Eternal Goods, and all fleeting Temporal Goods being now vanish'd and perish'd. Yet there are others who love Me preferrably to all things, tho' they retain some by-affection to the World ; which they endeavour to overcome and root out of themselves ; but, yielding to their frailty, don't accomplish it : this imperfect disposition of theirs for Heaven, fits them not for immediate happiness after death, neither is it such as to render them eternally miserable ; for, their affections to the World, as well as their love of Me, remaining with them at their death, they also, with the Soul, do survive her separation from the Body ; in which state, the knowledg of her greatest good being enlarged, she

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eagerly

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eagerly longs for its enjoyment ; of which, (however she's barr'd by these inclinations to the World, which she brought with her out of it, and will retain for her punishment till they are expiated, and the last farthing's paid) she cannot for ever be depriv'd. But she will at length be releas'd from those chains which hung loose upon her will ; those by affections being rather *Velleities* than a full bent of their Will embracing them as its *Last End* and *Final Good*.

Thus you see, *Philothea*, the several States of Souls departed this mortal life ; and that their future happiness, or unhappiness is the result of the Souls affections during the time of her pilgrimage on Earth. But the condition of Souls in the middle or purgative State, tho' very painful, has the comfortable satisfaction to be assured of Eternal Happiness at the great Day, for the coming of which all the faithful earnestly pour forth their Prayers, when they say, *adveniat regnum tuum*. And you

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you also see how my Justice proportions the punishment to the quality of the Offence ; and how your corrupt affections are, in the nature of *Debts*, to be *clear'd* either in this, or the next life, without any favour or pardon until the payment of the utmost farthing ; and that satisfaction must be made either with the transient pains of Purgatory, or the everlasting flames of Hell, if the Soul depart this life in final Impenitence ; or else, if in this life they be not effaced with sufficient Sorrow and Repentance, and with an early and voluntary suffering Afflictions for my sake, by which you shou'd alienate your affections from the World, and bestow them on Me your God and Redeemer. So that now is your time to resolve whether you'll be for ever happy, or for ever wretched ; whether you'll lay hold of such means as are conducing to Felicity ; or else abandon your self to the enjoyment of present delights, without regard to what consequences will inevitably

I 2 follow

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follow from giving your self wholly up to transitory Pleasures.

And without dispute, *Philothea*, if you took advice of unprejudiced Reason; you wou'd never suffer your choice to light upon the greater Evil; nor, on the other side wou'd you pitch upon the lesser Happiness. Certain then it is, that you wou'd prefer Temporal Afflictions, before those that are Eternal, and suffer the ills of this life rather than undergo them in the next.

The sixth Motive to engage your affection to my Cross, is the splendor of that future Glory which invirons the blessed; for, seeing it is expedient that all Men enter into it, thro' the Storms of sundry tribulations, and he who suffers most, for Me, gives greater proofs of his affection; and he who abandons most for my sake shall receive greater recompences at my hand: And he who despoils himself of All, shall not only have greater favours return'd to him, but, what is more, multiply'd a hundred fold, and, at last, Eternal Glory.

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ry. Hence follow's, that he who suffers with my Cross earns an everlasting Crown, and happiness that is always blown, and ever in perfection. What more profitable gain, and advantageous usury can be imagin'd in this World of miseries, then to buy, with them, pleasures that have no end? for, if a Man cou'd purchase Gold with Dirt, and Diamonds with Dung, 'tis clear that he wou'd engross an Immense heap of Wealth. Thus it happens in Spiritual commerce and traffick, in which I bid you employ your selves, when I said, *negotiamini dum venio*: For 'tis evident, that the pains and tribulations endured in this Life are of no weight, if ballanced with the felicities prepared for the blessed in Heaven.

The seventh Motive, is the enjoyment of a peaceable and quiet Lifetime here; for none enjoy rest and tranquillity of mind, but those who by a self-denial of worldly Pleasures for my sake, neither fear, seek, desire, nor procure any thing but Me: To follow and serve me on this man-

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ner, as it brings content and satisfaction to the Soul in this Life, so it is most advantageous, honourable, and glorious in the next. And those who make Heaven their chief care, and, in the first place endeavour to be happy there, will have all other blessings superadded to their desires.

These Motives, said *Philothea*, seem to run in the muddy channel of self interest, and therefore unfit either to incline or accompany us in our way to Heaven; in the pursuit of which we ought to be pure and free from all self ends.

Fear not, reply'd our Saviour, for Man being made to enjoy eternal happiness, as his ultimate and greatest good, the knowledg of it ought to raise his hopes to attain it, and kindle in his breast a desire and Love of it, as such: And if he shou'd not seek and covet his greatest good, 'tis plain he wou'd not act suitably to his Rational being, nor pursuant to the End for which he was created; wherefore, if he is not to love Heaven as the greatest blessing and good that
he

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he can possibly receive, what reason shou'd induce him to love it? Either the consideration that he may derive some advantage to God by his loving him, or some Good to his poor indigent self: The first is impossible, because he know's that God is infinitely, and essentially all that's Good, and all that's Happy, and is therefore incapable of receiving any Encrease: The consideration then of his own benefit, and interest must necessarily, and ought to prevail with him to love me preferrably to all things else.

It belongs to his Nature who is infinitely perfect in himself, not to be selfish or self-interessed: and to my Infinite Goodness to pour out my Blessings on my poor beggarly Creatures, without expecting to receive any Good in return from them; as I have taught my Disciples in those words *Beatius est magis dare quam accipere.* It is more Blessed to give than to receive. For the same reason I command them to honour, love and serve Me: For no greater honour

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can accrue to a Master than that his Workmanship be perfect, nor can any thing more perfect and enable my beggarly Creature than to raise their Minds to Me in such hearty affections, as most conduce to make them happy. So that all the good that comes by such holy Actions does only accrue to them, and not to my Infinite fulness; which cannot possibly receive any the least accession of Good from their Praises, Service, and Adorations.

But, my Lord, said *Philothea*, there are and have been persons eminent for sanctity, who love you most ardently, and merely upon the account of your own infinite merit, without regard to their own beatitude; and this my Lord is an affection worthy of you from a Creature, because it is disinterested, because it is pure, and because it is refin'd from all alloy of selfishness. Those, *Philothea* reply'd our Saviour, who, by an eager and vigorous application of their thoughts to the contemplation of the divine Attributes, advanced them-

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themselves to the enjoyment of those ravishing ideas that entirely possess'd them; found so much delight in those holy raptures, as carried 'em still on in the continuance of their meditations, without any other regard than that of repeating an exercise that improved their love of Me to an extraordinary pitch: And what cou'd a love rais'd to such a degree, produce in those Souls, but an Eternal union to Me after death, to whom they had entirely devoted themselves, and firmly tied their affections whilst they lived on earth? But the Motives that first induced these Saints to despise the World for my sake, were the hopes of being for ever happy; which love of Me receiving increase from those hopes, as they grew up and reach'd to the greatest hight, they cou'd attain to on earth; so likewise did it redouble, and mount unto the highest pitch, to which there was a possibility for it to rise 'till the separation of those Seraphick Souls from their clayie mansions: By which you see that their hopes of Heaven, and

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their love of it were nurs'd and bred up together, tho' their resignation to my will was such as made them express themselves in a manner that was wholly disinterested; and yet at the same time, they knew that it was impossible for me to make those Souls miserable who loved me so affectionately, and that nothing but their aversion from me cou'd make 'em forfeit their eternal happiness.

And I, who came into the World for the Salvation of Men, taught 'em that in Heaven was their greatest happiness, which they might assuredly hope for and expect to enjoy, if they placed their affections there during their abode on earth; and without this Motive of interest, nay, such as was superior to all temporal advantages, how wou'd mankind have been ever prevail'd with to abandon the present, for a future happiness? Without the hopes of attaining it, how cou'd I expect they shou'd love it? The love of a thing which you have no hopes to possess, if possible, must be very faint, and will naturally

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rally terminate in more admiration, if 'tis an object of that beauty and perfection which may deserve it: And you see with what difficulty Men are persuaded to love Heaven preferably to all things else, tho' exposed, in a manner, to their view in all its charms, and all the happiness it contains, and is freely offer'd to their possession upon the easy terms of loving it here with their whole heart; on which as a foundation of their future well being, I rais'd and built their hopes of its enjoyment by all the arguments that were proper for that purpose.

Live then, *Philothea*, with such an affection as may be continued to Eternity; and, to heighten that affection, confidently aspire to that happiness which Reason requires of you, which your eternal interest invites you to, and which is ordained for all those who love Me. Let not sensual, and worldly delights create a forgetfulness of Me: The pains you'll take to overcome your corrupt inclinations, and your sufferings in those

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those endeavours for my sake, will give birth to a passion for me in your breast, the flame of which will augment in proportion to your hopes of being for ever happy. The Glory of the next life, *Philotea*, is to enjoy Me, and the Glory of this, to love Me, animated with the expectation of that enjoyment. Love me, because I'm just and faithful to my word, which I've engaged that I will reward those with eternal happiness who prefer me to all things else, and, in this life, made me the sole object of their affections. Love me for having suffer'd infinitely to make you in love with Heaven, for having redeem'd you from the slavery of sin, and for having laid Heaven open to those who heartily desire it. And live in the assur'd Hopes of eternal happiness, to the end you may more ardently and affectionately embrace it, since 'tis impossible to love passionately what you don't hope to possess; or to possess Heaven if you never heartily lov'd it: And let your expectation of living for ever with
Me

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Me in Glory, raise your desires of it to that degree of affection as may be abundantly satisfy'd with an object that will infinitely delight you to all Eternity.

C H A P. XX.

Philothea becomes enamour'd of the Cross, yet capitulates for a truce, e're she attempts the way of it ; for which she's reprov'd by the Divine Majesty.

I confess, my Lord, said *Philothea*, that my Soul, vanquish'd with so much reason, begins to entertain an unwonted love of the Cross, and it no longer appears troublesome. The advantages that attend it, are manifestly great, and the horreur with which it's rigours, at first, struck me, afflicts me not with so much violence. Nevertheless, may it please your Divine Majesty to permit me to live some years before I engage in the way of the Cross ; when that term's expired, I'll take up my Cross and fol-

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follow you with a never to be extinguish'd Zeal, and fervour.

All these advantages, pleasures, and joy's that inviron the holy Cross, which I doubt not but I shall then see, and acknowledg, and return innumerable thanks for them ; all those charms and beauties that enrich it, will then fall into my embraces. Grant me, O Lord, the favour to taste both the one, and the other ; take pitty of my youth, and allow me some time to enjoy the World, e're I undertake so difficult an enterprise.

At the age of one and twenty, wou'd you load me with the burden of a Cross ? Will you, my Lord, rather see a flourishing youth blasted in it's bud, then let it grow to be full blown ? Must I be acquainted with sufferings, before I know content ? Must I feel the decrepid end of my life, before I taste the fruits of my younger day's ? Must I first wear the mourning livery of Sorrow and Affliction, e're I've entertain'd the morning of my age, with the gayity and pleasures

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fures that are ordinary to persons of my years and quality? And must I enter into the rough and stern embraces of penance and austerity, before I've been folded in the soft and gentler arms of the world's delightful blandishments? Allow me the fruition of my blooming Youth; I'll dedicate the rest, my Jesus, to you: Grant me the pleasant Spring of my Life, and still spend my Old Age, and dye in your service.

What's this I hear, *Philothea*? said our Saviour; when, in all probability, I might expect a confession from thee, not only that thou wer't enlighten'd and convinc'd, but that thou wer't disposed to obey, my ears are pierc'd with words that declare thee as much deceiv'd, and in as desperate a condition as ever. Thou desirest respite that thou may'st deliberate about following Me; but, in effect, 'tis for no other end than to pursue the way of thy utter undoing, to lose, and persecute Me. Thou begg'st to have the time of thy following Me put off, and impatiently long'st to see

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see the day's of thy sinful life hasten to their beginning. Thou'rt willing to Sacrifice thy life to Pleasures, or, rather, dress it up as a victim to the Devil; and to Me, the refuse and leavings of it. Thou present'st me, *Philothea*, thy death, or, to speak with more truth, it is not thine, but my death at which thou aimst, since thou wou'dst engage thy self in those sinful courses, for which I once already laid down my Life.

Thou drink'st a Cup, full of the strong, and lusty part of thy life, to all that ease and softness, which thy vicious appetite prompts thee to; but leavest to Me the dregs, and lees: The *first* and *best* is bestow'd in gratifying thy sensitive Nature, the *last* and *worst*, is reserv'd for Me.

Tell me, unhappy Maid, what reason will then urge thee to seek the Cross? Love, or Fear? If Love, how can'st thou cherish any hopes that it will find a place in thy Soul, prepossess'd with a violent passion for the pleasures of the World? what Love can remain for Me, after thou
hast

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hast surrender'd it up to carnal blandishments, and corruption? How can'st thou expect to serve Me with a sincere, and unspotted affection, having first yielded the possession of thy heart to sin, and impurities? What dispositions can that Soul have to receive the impressions of *Virtue*, that hath lived in a voluntary captivity to corporeal nature, and list'd it self an inglorious slave, to be led in triumph by insolent *Vices*?

If base and servile *Fear* of future misery shou'd at last force thee to seek repose under the shelter of the Cross, wou'd it be a handsome way to requite the love that made Me bleed my lifes last drop for thee? Like a slave, for fear of the lash, thou'lt seek a sanctuary under my protection; whilest my love, like a tender Spouse, makes an unwearied search after thee. And even the effects of this fear, thou so confidently promisest Me, when Age has almost stoop'd thee to the grave, is as uncertain as each moment of thy life. If thou'lt fear, fear now whilst time serves,

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serves, *Philothea*. To discourse, and chuse thus aims more at death than life ; nay, and at everlasting death, excluding all pretensions to that eternal life that know's not what it is to dye. Reduc'd to the last extremities of life thou bequeath'st to me, who alway's burn with love of thee, the miserable Reliques of it. I must be contented with the effects of thy Future fearful apprehensions which are the consequences of an ill-spent life, who give to thee my Present love : And with this Fear will't thou repay my Passion ?

I ask thee, *Philothea*, when will that Soul, that from its very cradle has been train'd in the practise of rashness, ingratitude, and shamelessness, meet a time for fear shame, and remorse ? If raw and yet unskill'd in wickedness, thou ar't Fearless, how will thy breast be susceptible of fear when thou ar't harden'd by an inveterate custom to do ill, and grown Old in Sin ? If now, whilest less criminal, thou ar't stubborn, what hopes of thy relenting when cover'd
with

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with a Swarm of Crimes? If a Thousand offences render thee now incapable of fear, what possibility is there thou shou'dst prevail against a Million? if now in thy full vigour, and entire strength thou findest thy self too feeble to bear My Cross, how will't thou be better able to effect it, when time and thy precedent vicious life have weaken'd, and consumed thy more vigorous and beautiful structure, and left nothing but the inconsiderable remains of what *was*?

The blindness which so great a lustre of worldly vanity has produced in thee, how vastly will it be increas'd when thou hast lived so many years in darkness? If thou'lt take up My Cross at the hour of thy death, what time will remain to follow Me? and, if thou scarce stoop'st to reach My Cross 'till age has stoop'd thy Body, and thou almost cease'st to be among the living, what time remains to give Me thy time, when thy time expires?

Who, simple and abused *Philothea*, who hath warranted thou shou'dst live to be Old? who hath assured thee

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thee thou shalt survive thy youth? Unkind *Philothea*, do'st thou grant *Me* what's Uncertain, and give what's Certain to my Enemy? Bestow what's present on thy delights, and what's future upon thy amendment? Have I dealt so with thee, who so early began to favour thee? Before thou wer't, I had ordain'd thy being; I had created, call'd, and given thee those inclinations that lead thee into the way of the Cross, which now thou foolishly refusest.

In the decrepid years, when time hath brought thy strength so low, as to make thy legs stagger under the weight of thy Body, think'st thou to carry the burthen of a Cross, which thou darest not undergo, in the prime and vigour of thy youth? Thou undervaluest a Present good, yet, fed with a deluding confidence, presumest to enjoy it, when uncertain, absent, and flying thy ingrateful invitations? Thou despisest now the Crown I offer thee with my Cross; yet, fugitive as thou art from the Crown and Cross, then nourish-
est

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est ungrounded hopes of finding both the one and the other whensoever thou shalt have a mind. Who ever finds the thing he seeks for, by looking where 'tis not to be found? Who ever reach'd the determin'd end of his journey that went the contrary way to it? If thy intension is to carry my Cross that thou may'st acquire a Crown, hope not to reap that benefit at thy last gasp, when thou hast distanc'd thy self so far from it, and run a way from the Cross in pursuit of temporal Pleasures, and Delights.

C H A P. XXI.

Our Saviour continues his reproof to Philothea, for deferring to follow the way of the Cross.

THou'lt not only be unable, Philothea, pursued our Saviour, but thou'lt also be unwilling to follow Me: Thou'lt be unable, for by what means can thy captive Soul, disengage her self from her servitude to worldly pleasures, to receive the Cross? It implies as great an impossibility

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sibility for a Man to indulge his sensitive nature, and carry my Cross, as it do's to couple *Belial* with God in one breast. For, how is't conceivable, unhappy Woman, that thou shou'dst be able to turn thy darling pleasures out of thy bosom, to make room for the entertainment of the Cross? Of what Art will thy odious, deform'd and captive Soul avail her self to break the chains in which a protracted habit of viciousness has fetter'd her? With what hands, with what files, or in what space of time; when thy hands long injured to work evil, are grown utterly unserviceable and useless to all that's good and holy, and ugly by being employ'd in unhandsom labours; what will empower thee to file of, with the nails of my Cross, the weighty chains of thy Offences?

If now thou feel'st a want of strength to follow Me, what will enable thee, when age has drain'd thee of thy youthful blood, and almost laid thee level with the grave? If now thou complain'st of a defect
of

Chappel of the Cross. 190

of power to serve and follow Me, how will't thou be impower'd *then* to maintain a vigorous fight, to conquer, and to triumph? If now thou art too feeble for easy undertakings, how will't thou be strong enough then, to tug with difficulties? If, after the trial of thy forces, yet firm and entire, thou findest thy self too weak to raise my Cross from the earth, what motives hast thou so confidently to believe that *then*, with virtue, light, or strength, thou'lt be able to lift, and carry it?

If there is required Virtue, nay and a large proportion of it to support my Cross, to merit, follow, and serve Me; peradventure, will an old, and inveterate custom of sinning, enable thee to merit? If each moment was spent in the study of evil, how can'st thou be an eminent follower of Virtue, of Perfection, and of the Holy Spirit? Having all thy life time, spoken no other language then that of Vice, how will't thou be able to speak the language of Virtue, at the hour of thy death? If now,
woun-

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wounded with thy passions, thou art resolutely bent not to quit them for my Cross, shall I believe thou'lt be willing to yield, when, by rendring thy self a slave to thy sinful appetite, thou hast lost all power over thy self, and can'st *will* nothing but what thy imperious Master will allow of? If now thou want'st courage to give some few passions a denial, will't thou then have acquired more Spirit and resolution to oppose a greater number of Vicious Passions and commanding ill Habits? If now thou art frighten'd at the approach of Ten Enemie, what terrour will possess thee when thou art to engage with Ten Thousand? If four ounces now over match thy strength, will't thou then be able to sustain the weight of pounds with out number? When the heavy burthen of thy Sins will be encreas'd prodigiously in size and Weight, and thy strength decay'd, will't thou be able, *Philothea*, to throw thy sins from thy shoulders?

In

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In thy warm and active Blood,
whilst fit for labour, and rational
discourse, thou reject'st my Cross:
And in thy chill and drooping age,
fit for thy Monument (cajoll'd Wo-
man, as thou art) offer'st thou thy
self to so sharp a remedy for thy
sins? Now in the lively spring of
thy age, fresh, and fair, and mistress
of thy senses, thou disregard'st thy
cure, and when pale death begins to
freeze thy Blood, and stamp his pi-
cture on thy *shrivel'd* and *furrow'd* face,
think'st thou then to begin to merit?
Can a Clock that's disorder'd mea-
sure out time into equal hours? Thy
powers, faculties, and senses, when
disorder'd, and put out of frame by
the approaches of thy dissolution,
what will they represent to thy sick
and crais'd imagination, but fright-
ful images of death, and the dread-
ful consequences of an ill-spent life?
Wou'dst thou not condemn that per-
son of the highest folly and indiscre-
tion, who, being sick, or wounded,
delay'd his cure 'till he was reduced
to a desperate condition? Shou'd he
K say,

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say, let me live wounded, as I am, I'll be cured at the point of death; let my wound fester and gangrene, and then I'll have a remedy apply'd? Let my malady first bring me to the confines of life and death, then I'll suffer my self to be heal'd: When my infirmity is past all cure, when all grounds of hope are vanish'd, and nothing remains but despair, then I'll receive whatsoever medicines you'll prescribe. What words, what discourses are these, but of a mad, and frantick Brain?

In fine, thou wilt neither have a mind, nor be able, *Philotheca*, to carry My Cross, either in thy Old Age, or at the hour of thy Death. Thou'lt not be able, because thy *will*, become slave to Sin, will not have power enough to break the chains, and the prison of thy sinful captivity: and thou'lt have no *mind*, because thou'lt have surrender'd the dominion of thy *will*, to the humour of that cruel tyrant, whose sensual authority will have more power over thee than thy own *will*. That Reason with which

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I enrich'd thee, thou'lt have enflav'd to the infamous pleasure of thy appetite ; and my Grace bestow'd on thee to fortify thy Reason, to the end thou might'st search after Me, will have no power to act in its own behalf, being wholly enervated by Vice, and misapply'd to vitious uses. As a nail with repeated blows is fix'd so deep, as 'tis impossible to draw it out ; so by redoubling sins upon each other, thou'lt have rivetted them so fast in thee, and, by an assiduous habit, have made thy Wounds so deep ; as nothing will be able to heal such inveterate soars, nor pull up Sins so frequently dinted and so deeply rooted in the Soul.

But who, abused *Philothea*, has assured thee, that, when thou shalt elicit an imperfect willingness, and be in some feeble capacity of executing thy will, I also shall be disposed and able to restore thy reason to act with its entire power and liberty ? Can'st thou, unassisted by Me, recover thy freedom ? and can I redeem thee from slavery without thy con-

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sent? If thou hast no mind, can I constrain and force thy will which I gave thee in full liberty? If thou opposest, what redress can I afford? If the Sick person refuse the aid of *Physicians*, how can they cure him? If amongst my own relations I cou'd not work Miracles, because their incredulity ty'd up the effects of my omnipotency, which cou'd not work upon the hearts of Men that were obstinately bent upon wickedness; how can I work thy cure, unless thou art disposed to receive the means that must bring it to pass, and unless thou art willing to embrace the advantageous offers which I've made?

To conclude, can'st thou rescue thy self from thy captivity to Sin, without My Assistance? Can'st thou wipe out thy offences without the help of My Grace? Can'st thou heartily and affectionately pronounce *Jesus* without *Jesus*? nay, if thou wer't staid in My grace and favour, wou'dst thou be able to advance further, unless *Jesus* continued his assistance

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ance to thee? If then, *Philothea*, whilst thou art in My Grace, thou can'st not move forward without My Concurrence, how wilt thou be able to work thy self into my favour, when My Grace has forsaken thee?

Whence presum'st thou, to find Me favourable to thee, who by repeated crimes hast drawn upon thee my displeasure, and hatred? Think'st thou to oblige Me with thy Offences? Think'st thou to endear Me to thee by abandoning, and running from Me? and when thou neglect'st Me wooing thee with submissions and entreaties, expect'st thou a Continuation of My love to thee? Thou crucify'st Me, and shall I work Miracles in thy favour? for what virtues, for what Merits, for what services of thine? Upon the account of thy numberless Offences? Is it fit I shou'd Honour thee, for persecuting Me all manner of ways? Is it fit My Mercy shou'd run in search of thee, because thou hast *built thy iniquities upon My shoulders?*

C H A P. XXII.

Philothea submits to our Saviours reprehension; yet, under the colour of an excuse, presses again to have the time of her following the Cross, delay'd: For which she's again reprimanded.

I Tremble, My Lord, said *Philothea*, at what I've heard you speak; whilst you argue, you convince, whilst you discourse, you enlighten, burn and confound me. Forgive my ignorance, born with my feeble nature; because I heard, and believ'd that your clemency was Infinite, and exceeded your other attributes, I thought you wou'd always be ready to protect me: and that I might venture to throw some years away upon my pleasure, with an intention to dedicate my more advanced age to serve under your Cross.

Thy Excuse *Philothea*, reply'd our Saviour, is far worse than the request it self. Is't possible, that under a vain presumption of obtaining My Pardon,

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Pardon, thou shoud'it hatch a design
to Crucify Me? Is't a rational dis-
course to say, I'll Buffet, Wound, Spit
upon, Scourge, and Crucify you, in
confidence of your great Mercy, and
of obtaining Pardon thro' the means
of it: and to say, permit me to as-
front you, I'm certain you'll recom-
pence me with your favour, and an
Immortal Crown? The Devil him-
self, *Philothea*, never durst presume
to talk after this rate. 'Tis true, he
detested, and Crucify'd Me, thro'
the means of his Wicked Agents: But
he never propos'd to have his dia-
bolical attempts rewarded with effects
of my Goodness.

Yet, Foolish and ingrateful Wo-
man, thou darest think to obtain
Mercy, by provoking my *Justice*. If
My Breast is full of *Clemency*, My
Hand is, also, arm'd with the Sword
of *Justice*. My nature is to reward
the good, and punish the bad; and
shall I bestow Crowns, and recom-
pences upon the wicked? can My
Mercy thwart My *Justice*? and My
Arm of *Justice* wound My *Piety*,
bisq K 4 Goodness,

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Goodness, and Clemency? Is My Im-
ensity capable of any defect or blemish? or can My Attributes affront,
 and strike at one another?

If My Unlimited Goodness stretch
 it self to all Creatures, in innumera-
 ble effects of Sweetness and Bounty;
 does not, My not-less-Infinite Justice
 equally extend it self in deserv'd Pu-
 nishments? Reflect, if the number of
 the *Reprobate* exceed not that of the
Predestinate; Consider what *Multitudes*
are call'd, and how *few Chosen*; how
narrow is the almost unfre-
 quented path of Glory, and how
broad, and throng'd with *Passengers*
 is the way to *Hell*. Did not I inflict
 an exemplary Punishment upon My
 stubborn People in the desert? of
 Six Hundred Thousand, whom I
 conducted out of *Egypt*, only Two
 Persons were priviledg'd to enter
 the Land of Promise. And if, after
 this computation, the number of
 Bless'd Souls were to be reck'nd, how
 few wou'd be happy? What was the
 Issue of your first Parents trespass,
 and how dearly has their posterity
 paid

Chappel of the Cross. 201

paid for the effects of their irregular appetite? Reflect how the Earth devour'd those contemners of My Servant *Moses*; how I caus'd above Thirty Thousand to be Kill'd, for rebelliously deserting Me, and raising *Idols* in the desert in My despite and contempt: How often I corrected the sinfulness of my Darling Nation; how miserably My Disciple *Judas* put an end to his Treachery; and Life; how great the ransom was that I paid for thee, as well at the Pillar, as at the Cross; with what rigour my Eternal Father treated me, that thou might'st be pardon'd. Call to mind the everlasting pains of Hell in which no end can be found, either of Torments, Souls Tormented, or Tormentors; nor will ever appear the least glimpse of pardon, or release.

Lastly, behold how inconsiderable the number, of happy Souls, is in respect of the uncountable Multitudes, which my *Justice* throw's into the shades of eternal Darkness, and Horrour. Will't thou be able, in-

grateful, insensible *Philothea*, to endure the pains of that dismal State, in which, so many Millions of wretched Souls lie Tortured; and whether all those go, that practice a discourse of the Nature of thine? Upon my *Patience* wilt thou build thy *Crimes*? Because assured that I'm Merciful, wilt thou be Cruel to me? Do'st thou, ingrateful Woman, misemploy so many enlightnings, and slight my call, by thy delays?

He who ask'd me leave to go bury his Father, when I call'd him to Me, was bid by me to *let the dead alone to bury their dead*; for those only are alive who follow and serve Me. He who ask'd leave to go acquaint his house that he was about to follow Me, upon the invitation I had given him to enter into the number of my followers, was answer'd that he shou'd not look behind, nor let go his design of following Me with a Cross. I turn'd *Lot's wife* (for no other reason but that she look'd back on *Sodom*, contrary to the Command she had receiv'd) into

Chappel of the Cross. 203

a Statue of terrour, as an example to posterity, which by its salt might season with prudence the actions of innumerable others. And thou, *Philothea* desirest, not to look back upon, but to return to *Sodom*. Thou beggest leave, not to go bury thy Father but to lose, and bury thy self; not to impart thy design of following Me, to thy Sisters *Honoria*, and *Hilaria*, but to suffer shipwrack with them. Is't thus thou repay'st My Infinite Kindness? Is't thus my Arguments convince thee? And is't thus the rayes of my Glory enlighten thee, and my Love inflame thee? Return to thy self, *Philothea*; return *Philothea* to Me, before I abandon thee, and before thou begin'st to search in vain, losing both thy self, and Me too.

Chap.

C H A P. XXIII.

Philothea consents to take the Cross upon her, but withal expostulates about it with our Saviour.

THE vanquish'd Philothea, finding her self not only unable to oppose such convincing Arguments, but that she was justly reprov'd by our Saviour, threw her self prostrate at his Feet, and begg'd pardon in these terms.

Alas! my Lord, I clearly see your Divine Goodness, which has suffer'd me to argue with so much vanity and folly, as to prefer excuses, and delays to prompt, and obedient following you; and 'tis evident that this mistake of mine is an effect of your Justice, chastising my stubbornness, with my Error; for there's no evil comparable to such a fall, nor any such punishment of Offences, as is the permission to commit new ones.

I've err'd, O God, I've sinn'd, chastise me with severity; but I beseech

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seech you grant my pardon, when you've punish'd me, if it be true that a corporal Punishment can obtain pardon for the Soul. Let your Justice mortifie this Inferior part which you have taught me to know; let your Mercy conduct and absolve the Superior, to the end it may never desist from the pursuit of that Good which it begins to comprehend.

To this, our Lord made reply; thy Malady stands in need of powerful Remedies: When I endeavour to win thee to me, by ways of Love, thou refusest to walk in any path but that of rigor. Rise, *Philothea*, from the ground, and lift thy thoughts to Heaven. It avails but little to have cast thy self on the Earth, if thou risest not humble and undeceiv'd. Thou may'st easily measure thy weak and wretched nature by the Earth on which thou hast lain. If thou knew'st that thou art earth, and must, at length, return to it, thou would'st love the Riches of Heaven, and doat no longer on the

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the miserable and fading Vanities of the Earth. *Philothea*, taking courage from our Saviour's Clemency, rais'd her self, and said.

I see plainly, my most benign Lord, that I've err'd like a weak, and miserable Woman as I am; now, my Redeemer, I'll take up the Cross, I'll put in execution whatsoever you command; and, maugre all the reluctance I derived from the weakness of my Constitution, or rather, the aversion I had conceived against the difficult way, you, my Lord, have so encouraged me, and the united force of Reason and Truth, have animated me to such a degree, that I'm resolv'd to serve under your Cross. But permit me, to have the grant of a few Articles, not in order to the quitting your Cross, but to the better carrying it.

You know, my Sovereign, that 'tis more adviseable to carry a Cross proportion'd to my strength, than one that's terrifying and insupportable. To walk when you are sure to fall, is a most foolish enterprise;

old

to

Chappel of the Cross. 207

to undertake the performance of what's impossible, is temerity, not prudence: an attempt to go under a burthen that's disproportion'd to the bearers strength, is rather an attempt to fall than to go.

The first Article I humbly offer, my Lord, to your consideration (as a means that's conducive to my design of following you;) is to obtain your leave, that I may lay it on me for my greatest ease and advantage, and that you wou'd be pleas'd not to do it for me. I'm perfectly instructed in the utmost of my strength, and wou'd carry it after my own fashion, with which I shall be better enabled to follow you. The second, intreats you that the Cross may not be of an extraordinary size; for, tho' I earnestly desire to serve you, yet my weakness is exceeding great, and it wou'd be injurious in me, to take the Cross to day, that I might lay it down again to morrow. The third, that it may be short, for 'twill be impossible I should support it, unless you, my Lord, vouchsafe to shorten it.

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it. The fourth, is that it may not be *heavy*, nor made of lead, iron, or any other gross material; for you are not ignorant, that my forces come short of bearing so weighty a load, and are not able to resist Affronts, Disgraces, and Ignominies. The fifth is, that it may be Transparent and Beautiful, that it may be seen afar off; to the end that the desire I have to follow you, may be known to every body, as well as the value I set upon that action; by which, my example will be the more conspicuous, and inviting to others, and the number of your followers swell to infinite. The last beseeches you, that I may have some intermitting days of rest, in which, by a cessation from carrying my Cross, I may recruit my strength; for your infinite Mercy can't but see how difficult it is for me to travel without some appointed days of respite. Upon these conditions, my Lord, I shall embrace your Cross with infinite Pleasure and Satisfaction.

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Is't possible, *Philotea*, reply'd the Eternal Majesty, that all My Arguments shou'd not perswade thee to repose thy trust in Me? Is't possible thou shou'd'st draw up Articles about following me? Did I confine the Work of thy Redemption within any Limits? Had my Love any Bounds? My Charity any stint? If then, I, the Creator of all things, deliver'd my self into the hands of Sinners, without any terms, limit, or measure, to redress the evil State into which you were miserably plunged; my Blood streaming from all the veins and pores of my Body to the last drop; how comes it to pass thou capitulatest with me, and sett'st limits to thy serving and following me?

With thy Spouse, Father, Lord, Redeemer, and thy God, do'st capitulate? Do'st thou offer Conditions to him, whom it is thy duty to serve, follow, and obey, in all Humility, and Resignation? And to him whose right it is to govern, and direct thy Will? What dost thou give me, that
thou

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thou didst not first receive from my Bounty ? What dost thou possess, that was not my Gift ? If thou art *Mine*, 'tis because I Created thee ; if thou art *Mine*, 'tis because I Redeem'd thee ; and if thou'rt *Mine*, 'tis because I Call'd thee. If in serving, and following Me with thy utmost power, thou fall'st infinitely short of paying what is due to such great Obligations ; what dost thou give me, when thou higglest thus that I may receive thee with Conditions and Reserves ? Can there be a Cross laid on thy Shoulders, of so heavy, rigid, and painful a nature, as will counterpoise, and satisfy for thy Sins ? Truly no. If this be impossible, about what dost thou capitate ?

My Lord and God, said *Philothea*, I'm not ignorant of this Truth ; but I don't take these Articles to be Conditions, Bounds, or Limits of my love to you, which is so great that I can't express it. I dye for you without a Cross, and the Love I bear you has already set my Breast
on

Chappel of the Cross. 211

on fire; yet I fear least by serving you with a Cross, and, which is more, a heavy one, I shou'd quit the way of the Cross; which wou'd so discourage me, and put me out of countenance, that I shou'd not only abandon my enterprize, but fall into a more deplorable State, than I was in before I set foot in this holy way. To begin, and not press forwards, is to recoyl further than I was at first.

All Men will laugh at me, if I do not follow you, and revile me if I do; they'll deride me, because I forsake your service, and reproach me because I engage my self in it. But, so long as they mock me for serving you, the glory of having constantly follow'd, and adored you, will sufficiently recompence and sweeten that grief. But to be scoffed at for relinquishing you, will be an inconsolable Affliction. If you wou'd be pleas'd to let me measure the weight of the Cross with my strength, proportion it to my ability, and so accommodate it to me as I shou'd be able

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able to bear it ; I doubt not but I shall serve you with an unshaken Zeal and Fidelity.

C H A P. XXIV.

Our Saviour shows Philothea the Errors in her Discourse, and encourages her by many examples to pursue the way of the Cross.

THou arguest, *Philothea*, so mistakenly, said the Divine Majesty, that I must needs dispel these earthly vapours that hang in mists about thy understanding, and let thee see how much thy discourse has wander'd from the truth.

Know then first that this love of thine to me is little less then *false*, since 'tis a love that can't endure a Cross. What love is that which refuses to suffer for the object beloved ? If I hear thee say (at the same time that thou professest a real passion for me) that thou wilt not hazard any affliction in my Service, how shall I believe thou really lovest me ? If
thou

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thou demand'st pleasure, and glory in following me, how shall I be persuaded that thy Breast harbors a true affection for me? What love will remain for me, when pleasures have the entire possession of thy Heart? Wilt thou woe me with thy Delights, and oblige me with thy vain and foolish Pleasures?

If thou decline'st taking up the Cross, because it's painful; if the Cross afflict, humble, and mortify thee, and yet thou refuse'st to undergo it, thou art more in love with thy *self*, than *Me*. Thou fly'st from the Cross because 'tis painful; in doing which thou cease'st to follow *Me*: certain then it is that thou prefer'st loving *thy self*, to loving, and serving *Me*: for whatsoever is deny'd to my *Cross*, is denied to my *Love*; and whatsoever is granted to one, is granted to the other. Not to love the Cross, is to have a stronger passion for thy self than *Me*; and to be tied faster to thy *own* pleasure than to *mine*, and to self love, than the love of *Me*. If self love is more predominant

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mirant in thy breast, than that which is due to Me, thou'lt every Moment, abandon me more and more, for thy own dearer sake.

The falseness of thy love, *Philothea*, is evident from another reason; for when I endeavour, by the sight of the Cross, to drive away thy *self-love*, which is the only obstacle to thy taking it up, thou art still seeking out some evasion; and, when ever I command one thing, thou desirest the contrary: and always avoid'st obedience to my will, that thou may'st put *thy own* in Execution. Since then, to execute my will, which is opposite to thine, is to punish and Crucify thy will; 'tis evident that our wills can never agree, unless thine be broken to endure the Cross, to desert which, is to abandon Me, and my will. Can he be call'd a true and real lover who slightly disobeys the will of the person for whom he owns a passion, and by whom he's mutually belov'd? If the Principal effect of love, is to make the person in love resign up his will to the object of his passion;

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passion; and thou deniest me thy will, to the end thou may'st not follow Me with thy Cross: and art determin'd to leave Me, and refuse me any power over thee, because I mortify, and cross thy will; after this, how shall I believe thou bear'st Me any affection, and dost not rather pay a blind obedience to all the suggestions of thy appetite?

Thou art also deceiv'd in thy opinion, that to carry thy Cross will make thee soon forsake my Service; for 'twill make thee walk with more assurance, and affection. Dost not see all those who have carried their several Crosses, with what Zeal, and Constancy they perform'd it? Consider my Mother, and Apostles, with what unshaken courage they stedfastly pursued their Journey to Eternal life thro' innumerable Crosses, and Tribulations. Most certain then it is, that to follow Me with a Cross, is to follow Me with vigour, and resolution.

Your Divine Grace, said *Philothea*, animated the Saints to do wonderful actions;

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actions, inspired with which, it was impossible for them not to follow you.

'Tis well, reply'd our Saviour, but what think'st thou of their Disciples, and Successors? Of so many Bishops, and others, whom I conducted thro' the toilsom, and laborious way of the Cross? Of the *Ignatiuses, Policarps, Martials, Marcelluses, Clements, Linus's, Cletus, & Anacletus's* of the *Denis's, Eugenius's, Cyprians, Laurences, Vincents*, and innumerable other followers of my Cross? Of the *Ambros's, Austins, Chrystoms, Hilaries, Martins, Nicholas's, Gregories*, with infinite other Bishops, who have follow'd Me with their Cross? And lastly, of the *Antonies, Pauls, Benedicts, Romualds, Dominic's, Francis's*, and others without number, who have travell'd Day, and Night in the rugged way of the Cross?

These, my Lord, said *Philothea*, were Men; but I'm a feeble Woman. And what were the *Agatha's*, answer'd our Saviour, *Agnes's Lucia's, Paula's, Leocadia's, Engracia's, Eustochiums*,

Ger-

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Gertrudes, Hildegard's, Lurgarda's, Brigits, Olimpia's. Pulcheria's, Teresa's; and Thousands other Spouses of mine? What way pursued they, but that of the Cross; (tho' I had never confirm'd any of them in my Grace) and, Millions of happy Souls who are now in fruition of Me? What path led them to Me, but that of the Cross? If they dy'd in their Infancy, my Cross saved 'em; if, when step'd into Years, mine and theirs; for their sufferings join'd to my passion were the means of their Salvation.

In fine, all those Souls that are now in the peaceable enjoyment of Eternal Happiness, what arms did they carry in their hands, what mark imprinted on their breast, and what burthen on their shoulders, but the Cross? And those who follow my example in Obedience, Poverty, Inclosures, and Chastity, what other Arms do they wear to defend themselves against the dangers of their journey, but my Cross? See'st thou not those Hair Cloth's worn by my Servants, those pectorals by the Pa-

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stors of my Flock, and those military Crosses, under whose protection they pursue their way, fearless of any thing that can disturb the quiet of their Souls? Since then, my Cross fortifies, and inspires a courage into the weakest Sex, and most dejected Spirits, which no pains can daunt, as is evident in so many Saints; whence hast thou the assurance to tell me, that thou shalt be more valiant without a Cross, then with one? Why dost thou defend thy self, with so many arguments, from undertaking it? and refuse to accept of it, unless I condescend to thy Articles? Was there ever any, besides thy self, so audacious as to capitulate with Me? Or did I ever entertain any in My service, with such conditions, and reservations, as thou proposhest?

Tho' what you say, my Lord, is most true, answer'd *Philothea*; that all Men generally are saved in virtue of your Cross, and their own; yet I believe there are some, so fortunate as to reach Salvation thro' the means of *your* Cross, without the assistance
of

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of their *own*, and go directly into the State of Happiness, tho' their life had been spent in the pleasures of the World. In the Society of these, 'tis my desire to live, who, after a flourishing Age in the embraces of Delights, have closed their days in Sorrow and Contrition, and been immediately convey'd from Earth to receive a Crown of Glory.

You are mistaken, *Philotea*, said our Saviour ; for there never was any born into the World, who did not undergo his Cross : even the infant that dies soon after Baptism, and is saved by my Cross, and the Faith of his Parents, had yet a Cross of his own, by lying Fetter'd in the Prison of his Mothers Womb, by coming into the World in pain, and leaving it, Tormented with the Agony of Death.

And those, who, as thou say'st, have departed this life in Repentance, after the enjoyment of many Golden years in prosperity and pleasures, unless their Souls are entirely converted to Me, cannot, possibly, enter into immediate Happiness, but must

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remain in Purgatory 'till the utmost farthing's paid. And 'tis hazardous, whether they ever repent their former follies, whom a continued series of delights have wholly charm'd into a perfect surrender of their Heart ; and if they express a Sorrow, 'tis to be fear'd that the loss of so much pleasure has a great share in their Affliction. Inveterate habits, *Philothea*, are not easily shaken of ; and tho' you shou'd be so happy as, in your declining Age, to see the many Errours you have committed ; you wou'd still encounter Difficulties in rooting those Old dear affections from your Heart, in which they had been so firmly, and so agreeably establish'd, during the space of many years. Be not, therefore, fond of running so great a risque, nor depend so much upon thy opinion touching the State of Souls departed in a death-bed repentance.

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C H A P. XXV.

Philothea presses our Saviour with other reasons, to admit of her Capitulations: He proceeds to undeceive her. Philothea, being made sensible by many convincing reasons that she was obliged to receive the Cross without any conditions, reply'd in these terms.

ALL these Saints of both Sexes, which you, my Lord, have named to me, are Souls which you enrich'd with your peculiar Grace to follow you, with a Miraculous Resignation, and embrace their heavy Cross with an admirable promptitude, and courage. But the World is thinly stor'd with such Examples, and I a poor, weak, and distressed Sinner, dare not raise my confidence so high as to expect such signal favours at your hands.

For this reason, since it is my resolution to serve you with an untainted constancy; and love you with a fidelity which nothing shall

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be able to divert; I desired to put my strength in ballance with the Cross, and lay it upon my shoulders in such a fashion, as I might zealously follow you, but without pain. It cannot be denied that he will Travel better who carries a light burthen, than he who is loaded with one so great, as he must necessarily either sink under its weight, or quit both it, and the way together.

How benighted, *Philotea*, with error, is thy understanding, reply'd the Divine Majesty! How little do'st thou comprehend of the way of the Cross! After so many instructions as I've given thee, thy Reason is as Blind as ever. Have I not told thee that the Cross is not measur'd by the greatness of its Bulk, but by the greatness of My Grace? Art thou not yet convinc'd, that a Mountain is of less weight to him who loves much, then a straw, to another whose love is Cold? Have I not told thee, that the outward heaviness, is increas'd, or diminish'd in proportion to the inward virtue, that deadens or en-

Chappel of the Cross. 223

enliven's it? Do'st thou not see the severest penitents give daily demonstrations, of a new increase of joy; and the less austere, sink more, and more, under the weight of their own sadness? See'st thou not those that are unclad, and most exposed to the extremities of heat and cold, under their heavy Crosses, take every step with more vigour, and activity, than others that are warmly cloath'd? Is there any cheat in this, to make thee doubt its truth? If thou'lt credit thy Eyes for thy own sake, why wilt thou not believe them for mine? Thou art convinc'd when thy Eyes tell thee, that the Penitents, are all o're bath'd in their own Sweat, from whence thou draw'st arguments in behalf of thy sensitive inclination; and why art thou invincibly bent to disbelieve what thou see'st, when thy Eyes assure thee that the most rigid Penitents express no signs of any Grief, or Affliction? And why are not thy arguments rather deduced from this head in Favour of Reason and My Cross?

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But, if neither the Examples which I've alledg'd, nor your own Eyes, will convince you ; believe at least, what I'm about to say. Thou excusest thy self, *Philothea*, under the pretence that thou'lt follow Me more readily without a Cross, than with one ; and I've sufficiently manifested the impossibility of thy design ; since none can follow Me, who keep not my precepts, and to do this, is to follow Me with a Cross. To this, thou add'st a desire of accomodating thy Cross to thy forces, pretending that by this means it will become more supportable ; and that a Cross chosen by *thy self*, having the conditions granted thee which thou hast demanded, will enable thee to follow me with more Zeal and diligence, than one laid on thee by *my hands*, and is of the proportion of those carried by others with the particular assistance of My Grace.

I pass in silence, *Philothea*, the just complaint I cou'd make against thee, for being so diffident of Me ; and suspecting that I wou'd not be so faithful,

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ful, as not to over charge thee with a greater load than thou'rt able to carry; tho' I often repeated, that I'm faithful to my word, and will never consent that any one shall be Tempted beyond his strength.

I omit to tell thee, how deeply I resent thy distrust of me in a thing most distant, and disagreeing from my nature. For thou art apprehensive, either that I will not proportion the burthen to thy strength, or, that I know not how to take just measures. If my imagin'd Ignorance is the occasion of thy distrust, thou offend'st My Infinite Wisdom, which created, and disposed this World into the miraculous order in which it subsists: If thou think'st, *I will not*, thou woundest both My *Justice*, and My *Love*. For thou might'st well know, *Philothea*, that he who laid down his life for thy redemption, wou'd not impose a load upon thee, until he had in every respect fitted it to thy strength.

Neither will I mention, the displeasure which thy poor shifts, and excuses give me; when thou saidst
that

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that those who follow'd Me had the *peculiar* Assistance of My Grace. Thou might'st well know, *Philothea*, that my Grace is neither weak'nd nor grown Old with time ; that it is never wanting to those who seek Me, and much less to those whom I My self search after, as I did *thee* ; and it is apparent that whatsoever I do, and have done for *thee*, is an effect of My *peculiar* Grace ; and therefore that to throw the blame upon My Grace, is to excuse thy weakness, and increase thy fault by endeavouring to diminish it.

But I'll forgive all this, provided thou dost not wilfully shut thy Eyes to my following discourse, which shall be so evident as to convince any thing but a perverse understanding.

Tell Me, *Philothea* ; if thou designest to follow Me, with an intent never to abandon Me ; what will sooner shake this resolution, the following Me with thy Cross, or with mine ? Undoubtedly, with thine ; for if thy Cross is thy *self-will*, and to forsake Me is the same as adhering to thy *Will* ;
it

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it is very certain that thou art, and will't be in so much a readier disposition to leave Me, the more thou art led by thy own will to follow Me.

On the contrary, if in following Me, thou obey'st *my* will without dispute, thou'lt serve Me with a resolution the more unchangeable, the stronger thy endeavours are to *comply* with my will. If the taste of such as abstain, only to humour themselves, is unprofitable, because they are inspired by their capricious Fancy; hast thou any reason to desire my approbation of thy Cross, and authorise thy adhering to it thro' a fancyful instinct of thy own will, since an action of that nature cannot possibly avail thee any thing?

If thou'lt only carry a Cross of *thy* chusing, and *when, how, as little time,* and *of what weight* thou pleasest; in this desire thou hast of the Cross, where, *O Philothea*, where is that which ought to *Crucify* thy Will? How dost thou follow Me with a Cross, when all thy Cross is to obey thy own will, and fancy? For to carry it only *when,*
how,

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bow, and upon what account thou pleasest, is to contemn, and trample it under foot ; or, at least, to be wedded to thy *will* under the false notion of a Cross, which, in reality, is to thwart My *Will*, as much as lies in thee.

To conclude, the same means thou usest to *make* a Cross, *destroys* it ; for whilst thou art busied in forming a Cross of pleasures, and ease, instead of restraining thy appetite the better to love Me, thou giv'st it an unbridled liberty, to engage thy affections faster to the World. The same path that, to thy appearance, conducts to *me*, leads thee nearer to *thy self*, and when thou seem'st to be within the reach of a Crown, thou standest upon the brink of a Precipice.

Thou'rt also deceiv'd, *Philothea*, to think that *thy* Cross will tie thee more inseparably to Me, then *mine*, which thou conceiv'st will overmatch thy strength. First, by reason that thou not only, not follow'st Me with thy Cross, as I've already said, but thou endeavour'st most inhumanly to per-

Chappel of the Cross. 229

persecute, and Crucify Me ; for by declining my will, thine is nourish'd, and tormented with a head strong obstinacy, in opposition to mine. Secondly, because I'm the *way, the truth, and the life*; whence 'tis evident, that, if thou takest not *my* Cross, thou walk'st not *in my* way; without which 'tis impossible to arrive at thy journey's end, *Truth, and Life everlasting*. Thirdly, because 'tis a great mistake of thine, to imagine thou'lt go with less trouble, having a moderate Cross of thy own, than a more weighty one from me: for thine will keep thee in thy evil courses.

If the greater Cross, *Philothea*, is the greater Perfection, who'll border most upon evil, he who's advanc'd to a *high* degree of sanctity, or he who stands on the *lower* steps of Virtue? If the way of Sin is contrary to that of Virtue; will not he ly most exposed to the assaults of Vice whom a Cold and imperfect love of whats good makes halt, as 'twere, between one and tother? If to insist in my foot-steps with a Cross, of what size and

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and proportion soever I shall think fit to give it, is to *obey* my Will ; who approaches nigher to me and virtue, he who embraces my commands, or he who withdraws himself from them, because the Cross suits not with his humour ?

○ Tell me, abused *Philotea*, who stands closer to the brink of prohibited Delights, he who contains himself within the bounds of what's permitted, or he who avoids even that, to the end he may not be induced to intrench upon what is ill, and forbidden ? Who is in greater danger of doing what is *bad*, he who, in obedience to *my Will*, resolutely pursues the way of Holiness, or, he who, in obedience to his Appetite, lets his passions run away with him, in a full career from what is Good, to precipitate him into an abyss of Miseries ?

Which of the two, in thy opinion will soonest reach the end of the race ; he who walks nimbly, or he who moves with a tortoise pace ? Who's most likely to win the prize, the

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the valiant who contends for it with much strength and vigor, or he who has neither courage nor strength? Who's fitter for a combat, he who by frequent trials is grown a Master in the Profession, and upon all occasions, has been Invincible; or he who never enter'd the Lists, or very seldom has been crown'd with Success? Who, in all probability, will behave himself with most valour, the Nice and Delicate, or the Strong and Hardy? He who, through fear, turns his back upon a difficult enterprise, or he who has often toil'd and sweat in the most hazardous attempts?

Who, *Philothea*, is most advanc'd in virtue, he who lives in the midst of Pains, and Tribulations, to sustain which with a victorious patience for my sake, is his ordinary practise; or he who yields himself up to the soft dalliances of effeminate pleasures (tho' he does not exceed the limits of what's permitted) which commonly foment and cherish many vicious Inclinations? Is not that

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that City, more able to hold out, which is fortify'd with a strong Garrison to defend its Walls, then that which has neither Walls nor Men?

Is't not certain, that the further a Man is from Evil, the more secure and firm he is in Virtue? Is't not evident, that opportunity betrays the Soul to Sin? and is't not clear, that delights, ev'n those that are permitted, do dull, and obscure the Reason, and blow the fire of Appetite?

If *Adam*, your first Parent, whom I endow'd with Science, Grace, and an Absolute Power over all Creatures, as well as himself, cou'd not preserve that Empire amongst the Felicities of Paradise; nor *Solomon*, that miracle of Wisdom, defend himself from being wounded by the charms of Women; and, on the other side, if *Job* was as invincible on his unguarded dung-hill, as if he had been environ'd with impregnable intrenchments; who is there that trembles not at the bewitching allurements of Pleasure, and runs not to the

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the encounter of Trouble and Affliction?

But to the end thou may'st see the little reason that accompanies thy Discourse, and thy endeavours either to fetter my Cross with certain limits and restraints ; or to make one after thy own fancy, through an opinion that thou canst carry *it* with greater facility than *mine* : I'll take so much compassion of thee, as to undeceive thy erroneous understanding, making the thread of my Discourse, run gradually through *all* thy conditions, and convincing them, severally, of Unreasonableness ; and out of farther tenderness to the nicety of thy disposition, I'll make it plainly appear that thou contradictest thy own desires, and utterly destroyest thy own pretensions, with what thou askest of me.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXVI.

Our Saviour declares, with what prejudice to her self Philothea desires to lay the Cross on her shoulders with her own Hands, and accommodate it to her own Mind.

THOU art convinc'd, *Philothea*, pursu'd our *Saviour*, to undertake the *Cross*; and thou art also persuaded that the way is not so unpleasant as it first appear'd to thee. Yet thou say'st that thou'lt follow me with a *Cross*, only on condition that I permit thee to make it suitably to thy will and pleasure, to let thee fashion it to thy humour, and put thy strength in ballance with it, ere thou undertakest the carriage of it.

Besides this, thou woud'st have it short of continuance, and not distastful; not made of *Iron*, nor any material that is not glorious to the eye, and conspicuous to those who are distant from it; and that thou may'st have the liberty to rest thy self, and lay

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lay it down whensoever thou art sensible of any wearyfomness.

Now, my design is to convince thee, that, if thy intention is to follow me with a Cross, as I've heard thee affirm ; thou utterly destroyest thy resolution by capitulating with me about it.

To effect this, I'll not avail my self of the Discourse in which I've already made appear that to follow me on this manner is neither to follow me *with*, nor *on* a Cross, but to do thy pleasure upon my Cross, and to banish my *will* from *thine*. The Cross that is govern'd by *thy* proper *will*, and *fancy* is *thy* Cross, and not *mine* ; and a Cross animated by *Self-will*, has a greater share of *Humour*, than of the Cross.

I pass by these remonstrances, *Philothea*, and taking in my way each of thy Articles, as they lie in order, I will discover the cheat that lurks under thy desire to be thy own absolute Mistress, in the way of the Cross, framing one that better relishes with thy palate : which plainly

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ly (how specious soever thy pretences are) is nothing but a new Invention to get loose both from my Cross and Me.

In the first place, *Philothea*, thou hast a mind to carry the Cross according to thy Fancy, and so as may be most easie to thee; but all that seems to thee conducing to that end, is a means very prejudicial and destructive to it.

If the End is to carry the Cross, and the Cross is to suffer Pains and Displeasures *for my sake*; dost thou ever set a foot forward in this way, so long as thou followest the suggestions of *thy will* and *humour*? And if the end of carrying the Cross is to raise thy heart to *Me*, by mortifying thy *humour* and *sensual gust*; is't not certain that the gratifying thy *humour*, ruins that very Cross of which thou art in search?

I'll sustain, say'st thou, the burthen of the Cross, but so as shall be agreeable to my *humour*. Can there be a proposal more opposite to the way of the Cross? Agreeable to thy *humour*! this

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this Language, *Philothea*, is wholly *Sensitive*, the way of the Cross is altogether *Spiritual*.

Pursuest thou the way of the Cross, and yet art guided by thy Appetite and Humour? The perfect followers of my Cross have made the *Sensitive* Man, submit to *Reason*, which prompts them to desire that which is just; their endeavour is to banish from themselves, all corrupt inclinations, and such as are prejudicial to a perfect resignation to my Will.

Wilt thou charge thy shoulder with a Cross *Philothea*? Thou'rt mistaken, thou must not crucify thy *Shoulders*, but thy *Appetite*; thou must nail thy *humour* to the Cross, if thou'dst truly suit it to thy *humour*. Did I lay the Cross on my own shoulders? Did I fit it to my *humour*, or had I any hand in the fashioning of it? Was it not made by my most cruel Enemies? Yes, *Philothea*, the enrag'd phrensy of a malicious rabble, set on, and encouraged by Monsters of humane nature, oppress'd
Me

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Me with a Heavy Cross: My mortal *Enemies* made it, and not only did so, but *forc'd* it upon me. From my Nativity 'till my Death, I never gratify'd my *humour*, but obey'd my Father's Will. My Pains, and Afflictions, *Philothea*, were fashion'd by the command of another.

A spiritual life, admits not any such remiss word as to mention her *humour* to the Soul. For example, *it is my pleasure, or, 'tis not my pleasure*; these words proceed from *sensitive* nature, and are too prophane for a temple of the Holy Ghost, and misbecoming such a sacred way; for there ought not to be any other *will* and *pleasure* in the World than *mine*; for your *will* and *pleasure* shou'd be to act according to my advice, and in all things to yield with a perfect resignation to what's ordain'd and commanded by Eternal Wisdom.

But, suppose I shou'd permit thee, *Philothea*, to lay the Cross on thy shoulders, to thy own *fancy*; think'tt shou, with this, to carry it more at thy *ease*? 'Tis a gross mistake; believe me,

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me, 'twill make thee support it with much greater *inquietudes*.

If thy *pleasure* or *fancy*, is a legitimate Child of thy *sensitive appetite*, and thy *appetite* is naturally *inconstant*, *various*, and *unquiet* : I ask what effects will the Child of so unfortunate a Mother produce ? It will scarce have plac'd the Cross in one posture, ere the same insatiable pleasure command it to be chang'd into another. It will no sooner be laid on one shoulder, ere it be remov'd to the other ; thus will the Cross be in perpetual Motion, from this place to that, and from one posture to another ; by which means it will come to pass, that neither thou, nor thy restless *pleasure* will stop 'till it is quite thrown off thy shoulders.

And this, *Philothea*, is very clear, for if the Cross is to do *my will*, and, which is more, to *Crucify* thy *Irrational will*, which thou desirest shou'd be mistress of my Cross ; is't not certain thou'lt never rest till thy shoulders are disburthen'd of it ? Seeing, then, thou hast taken a resolution to follow

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follow Me with a Cross; 'tis plain thou overthrow'st what thou hast resolved by accomodating the Cross to thy *humour*.

Self-will, Philothea, is so far from bringing any content, that it creates nothing but disquiets; and those only enjoy a perfect tranquillity who let themselves be govern'd by *Unprejudiced Reason*, which is *my will*. There's no repose, as I've already said, to be expected from a *humour*some will, 'till it has made an unreserv'd surrender of it to the *Divine*. So that if thou'lt carry the Cross, thou must necessarily, renounce, and disclaim *thy humour*; and consent that *my will* shall sit at the helm of all thy actions.

But, of what nature are those other words I heard drop from thy mouth? *I've a mind to carry the Cross after my own fashion*. After *thy fashion, Philothea*, and not on whatsoever fashion I shall please to give it thee! Is not this to destroy the *substance*, with the *manner* of it? My Cross, *Philothea*, is not limited to any fashion; and, if it has any, it is, to be destitute of all.

So

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So much do's that person detract from *my* Cross, as he adds of his *own* manner of carrying it. But he who is really My Disciple receiv's it when, and on the same fashion that I give it him ; carries it just as I lay it upon him ; disputes not about the *length*, *breadth*, *materials* or *weightiness* of it : never parts with it 'till I release him ; and measures out every action of his life, by my *will* and *pleasure*, being well assured, that to *humour* himself is not to carry My Cross at all.

C H A P. XXVII.

Our Saviour, *lays open to Philothea,*
the gross cheat that lies conceal'd in her
request of a Little Cross.

THY next Article, *Philothea*, said
our Lord continuing his dis-
course, is that thy Cross shou'd not
be Great, to the end thou may'st sup-
port it without much trouble ; this
shows how forgetful thou art of what

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I've repeated to thee so often. For I've told thee that Crosses are not measured, nor weigh'd by their *bulk*, and *proportion* but by the *strength*, and *succours* which I give the bearers of them: Ask Grace of Me boldly, *Philathea*, but, by no means, lessen the Cross.

Thou imagin'st, because the Cross is *little*, and *thine*, it will be less weighty than a great one. But thou'rt coulen'd, *Philathea*; for, a Cross of Ten Pound weight, chosen by *thy self*, is heavier then one of a Thousand pound weight from *my hand*. The reason is very plain, for *thy* Cross has nothing of *My Assistance* join'd to it, without which the highest things are heavy as lead, and, with it, the heaviest are as light as air.

Hast thou not observ'd what cruel sufferings have been undergon by many, and suffered with a patience that made them look on their Afflictions as trifles below their notice, and only worthy to be despised? See'st thou not those Souls who have made their *own* Crosses, so comfortless, so unable to go under
their

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their weight, that, unless they implore My Mercy, and obtain it, they must necessarily Perish with their burthen?

At such time as thou hast beheld some of my most zealous followers, carry their weighty Crosses of a close retirement to some strict order, or state of life, confined to the Vows of Poverty, Obedience, and Chastity; which are crosses of no ordinary weight; when I say thou viewd'st these, did there not visibly appear, in their faces, and actions, marks of Joy, and an Undisturb'd Serenity of Mind? There are others in the World who make themselves Crosses in their very pleasures and delights, and meet with discontent where they propose to find matter of diversion; so that whether they are at the Play-house, at a Feast, or at the Courts, or Palaces of Kings, they encounter Disgusts, sigh at the weight of their heavy Crosses, and inwardly groan under the pressure of the Afflictions that distract their

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minds,

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minds, and leave them without hope of Comfort or Relief.

And what's the reason of this difference, *Philothea*, but that my Grace lends its assistance to some ; on whom if I lay my Cross with one hand, I help them to carry it with the other ; but those, who either make their Crosses *without* my consent, or *against* it, I suffer to go on in their intended courses, to pant under their Sorrows, and lie o'erwhelm'd with their burthen? Those Crosses are *Insupportable* that are *destitute* of my Grace, and those that are assisted by it, are Light, and of very easy carriage.

But if I shou'd give thee liberty, *Philothea*, to *measure, weigh, and adjust* the Cross to thy strength, without having any hand in it my self, art thou not sensible, foolish Woman, that thou'lt always mistake in thy choice of the Cross, and never taste any true *calm* or *repose*, until thou hast made an entire surrender of thy self to *My* Cross? For, if
thou

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thou know'st very little of thy self, and I penetrate the greatest Secrets that are lock'd within thy Breast; how much better can I judge of thy strength, than thou? And how much more likely art thou to err in taking the true dimension of thy Forces, and in the knowledge of what burthen they can sustain, than I? When thy *Presumption* bids thee make a Cross, thou'lt make one so big and heavy, that when it comes to the test, thy forces will fail thee, and come far short of performing what thou *presumed'st* thy strength wou'd reach to. But, when thou examinest thy self with a *Distrustful* eye, viewing thy self in a weak condition, frighten'd with the great odds conceiv'd to be betwixt thy feebleness, and so great a burthen; thou wilt make a Cross so little, as will rather be a *Toy* to play withal.

Add to this, that all the time thou should'st employ in my Service, will be spent in fashioning a Cross to thy unsteady mind; for,

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since thou desirest that thy will, (a changeable and capricious power) thou'd be the overseer of thy work; no Cross whatsoever will hit thy *humour* long; but displease thee, either because it is too *long*, or too *short*, too *broad*, or else too *narrow*. Thou wilt always have the Plain in thy hand, and be wholly busied in shaving away, or joining to thy Cross, in working and sweating to no purpose.

Lastly, thou'lt labour in weighing thy strength with the Cross thou hast in hand, 'till such time as all the sand in thy Glass of Life will run out in the unprofitable circle of *doing* and *undoing*, *liking* and *disliking*, *measuring* and *remeasuring*: without advancing a step forward in thy pretended way of the Cross.

It is, moreover, certain that since the Cross is to be measured by thy weakness, thou'lt proportion the weight of it to thy capacity; but, upon trial, finding it yet too heavy, thou'lt

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thou'lt fall again to work, plain it afresh, and cut so much off as made it too weighty : Then, coming to a second proof, and finding thy strength decayed, more must be pared away. Thus, through the hourly decrease of thy vigour, more and more of the Cross will fall under the hatchet, rather than thou wilt endeavour to exert thy *Strength* and *Courage* : For, if thou givest thy self up to the dominion of *thy will*, thou wilt yield to what's facil, which is to remove all trouble, and never undertake any thing that is difficult. In this manner it will necessarily come to pass, that by often cutting, and paring away ; the Cross will utterly be destroyed and whittled away to nothing ; and thou'lt shamefully abandon the enterprize thou hadst begun. See'st thou, *Philothea*, how ruinous thy Mediums are to the End thou hast proposed ?

C H A P. XXVIII.

Our Saviour shows Philothea how inconvenient it is, to desire a Cross that is not Large, Ignominious, or of what Nature he is pleas'd.

THY third Article, *Philothea*, (and 'tis a Child really born of thy corrupted nature) intimates an unwillingness to accept of a *long* Cross; and an earnest desire to have it *short*: because thy intentions are to suffer but very *little*, to the end thy pleasures may enjoy a *longer* reign. But tell me, if thou undertakest the Cross in order to thy own Salvation, and to follow My Example more perfectly; to what purpose dost thou beg it shou'd be of *short* continuance? Peradventure, if it must be proportioned to thy Good, must it not also be proportion'd. to the term of thy Life?

Thou would'st either have me shorten thy Life, or the Cross; if

I

Chappel of the Cross. 249

Shorten the Cross, thou'lt lose the Eternal Happiness which thou desirest, and is only attainable, through the assistance of my Cross; if I shorten the number of thy days, thou must, at the same time, part with so much of thy temporal Pleasures, of which thou art so doatingly fond, and for whose sake thou refusest my Cross.

I can never, my Lord, consent, said *Philothea*, to part with a moment of my Life; which I rather desire may be protracted to an exceeding length; but am very willing to have something cut away from the Cross; yet, if Eternal Life is tied to the Cross with so strict a dependence, as the forfeiture of one is infallibly consequent to the diminishing of the other, I'm content to live with the Cross, rather than by cutting it have all hopes of Eternity cut off.

Well then, *Philothea*, reply'd our Lord, since thou wilt not agree to the shortning of thy days; it is in-

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dispensably necessary to future Happiness, that the Cross be of equal durance with thy life. But suppose it were not ; what part of the Cross would'st thou have me cut away ? The *beginning*, *middle*, or *end* of it ? If the *beginning*, 'tis certain thou hast no mind to set footing in the way of the Cross, nor ever attempt to carry it ; and he who never begins, can't possibly be crown'd at the end of the race.

If thou would'st have a part taken from the *middle* of the Cross, how wilt thou attain the *end* without passing through the *middle* ? and, consequently, how wilt thou attain Salvation if that is wanting ?

If from the *End* ? (a time that exacts thy utmost industry and endeavour for gaining Heaven, because 'tis the last act of thy Soul on Earth) thou askest thy utter Ruin and Damnation ; and whilst thou desirest me to lop off this part of the Cross, thou beggest that I wou'd deprive thee of a Crown ; for my Cross,

Phi-

Chappel of the Cross. 251

Philothea, which in the Beginning, and Middle seems painful, and laborious, in the End is a Recompence, Glory, and a Crown. See then, if thy reason is not blinded, whilst it prompts thee with Arguments, that plead so much against thy good.

I, my Lord, answer'd *Philothea*, beg this favour, for no other purpose, but that I may not be constrain'd, by the over-bigness of your Cross, to throw it on the ground.

My Cross, *Philothea*, reply'd our Lord, is never lay'd aside by reason of its Greatness, but only when, out of a peevish self-wilfulness, thou carry'st it after an awkward fashion.

When I, overwhelm'd with the weight of my Heavy Cross, trail'd it after me upon My Knees; all Heaven ador'd it with submission, because I carried it in obedience to my Father's Will; and though it seem'd prostrate, it was exalted, On the other side, at such time as thou carriest My Cross, shortn'd, made lighter,

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lighter, and advanced into the air, resting on the shoulder of thy vain-glorious will, then my Cross is really dragg'd on the Earth.

What I've often said upon another occasion, is also verifi'd of the Cross; *He who humbles himself shall be exalted; and he who exalts himself shall be humbled*: For he who sustains my Cross with Humility, though he trail it on the ground, shall be exalted in Heaven; and he who bears it with pride and vanity, tho' by carrying it upright he receives the acclamations of Men, shall be crush'd into Humility. Suffer me then, *Philothea*, to lay on thy shoulders, a Cross of what length and bulk I please; if thou intendest to advantage thy self, or merit by it.

Thy fourth Article, *Philothea*, is that thy Cross should neither be of Iron, Lead, or any base and ignominious Material. And this most essentially contradicts the Nature of the Cross; for, if my Cross imports nothing but Ignominy, Affronts,

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fronts, and Disgraces ; vain are thy intentions to carry it without them.

If my Cross is *Humility*, what madness is't, *Philothea*, to ask that it should not be abject and obscure ; but vainly-glorious ? That Cross is most splendid in my Eyes, which in thine is dark, and ignominious. The Cross of Iron is changed to Gold with Charity ; and that of Lead, is render'd sparkling like one of Diamonds, by holy Patience.

The Cross I intend to give thee, *Philothea*, is of *Wood* ; the same material with that on which I suffer'd, and which I purpose to fashion for thy best advantage. That Cross is most acceptable to me, which I find most tractable, and in the working of which, I meet with little opposition.

The Crosses, *Philothea*, from whence Merit is derived ; are neither Corporeal, nor Material. It's said, that good Water should not have colour, smell, or taste ; such ought the Cross to be in a Spiritual Life ; for he who carries

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ries it should neither wish to have it displayed in gawdy Colours, that it may attract the Eyes of distant Persons; nor desire the taste of self-will; nor the smell of Ostentation, and vain Esteem; it must perfectly resemble the most transparent Water, the intention of its bearer being no other than to follow me with Humility, and suffer for my sake, in hopes of Heaven, but without any mixture of earthly Interest or Vain-glory.

So that, *Philothea*, when you offer your shoulders to receive the Cross, and at the same time, shun the Ignominy and Disgrace of it; nay, desire it dressed in Pomp and Vanity; you express outwardly, 'tis true, an humble disposition to bear the Cross; but, in reality, want that Love, that Affection, and that Charity which I so earnestly recommended; which ought to animate, and enliven all Christian Souls, and which sweetens the Burthen of the Cross.

My

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My Cross, *Philothea*, is Ignominy in this Life, but Eternal Glory in the next : My Cross is Pains here, but Pleasures, without end, hereafter ; My Cross is Affronts, Persecutions, and Calumnies on Earth, but everlasting Repose, Content, and Joy in Heaven.

And who art thou, most vain *Philothea*, who pretendest to *Honour*, *Pomp*, and the *Applauses* of the World, in the very Cross it self ? For what reason, vile Wretch, dost thou covet Honour ? How hast thou deserv'd it ? What is thy origin ? Whence is thy Descent, that makes thee so ambitiously aspiring ? What art thou more than animated Clay ? Is not thy origin very loathsom, and thy whole Fabrick a frail machine of Dust ?

Art thou not a Vessel of impure Dirt, and a fruitful Mother of Worms, for whom thou wilt one day become Food ? Is not thy Life hitherto, a Shadow, hardly distinguishable, and already vanish'd ?

Art

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Art thou not vanity it self, and inconsistency? Glass is not so frail as thou art; a flash of Lightning passes not with more swiftness than the flying Moments of thy Life. Like a fiery Meteor, for a time thou reflectest a faint dim Light; when, suddenly, falling to the Earth, it ceases any more to shine.

What Honour can Dirt and Corruption merit? Whence can it derive matter for Vanity and Ostentation? Seekest thou for Honour in the Cross? I embrac'd Dishonour, Affronts, and Ignominy in *Mine*; thou aimest at *Greatness*, *Pomp*, and *Hosannah's*. Whether does thy Pride, whether does thy foolish Vanity aspire?

CHAP.

C H A P. XXIX.

Philothea offers her Reasons why she demanded an honourable Cross; our Saviour undeceives her, and instructs her in the inconveniencies of it.

BUT My Lord, said *Philothea*, since all the World esteems those highly, who follow you in the way of the Cross, and that every body pays them respect and veneration; I thought that I might secure that point of honour to my self without committing an Offence: For, it seem'd to me, that since the opinion, and reputation of Sanctity which the World bestow'd on them was no prejudice to their Virtue, I also might, inoffensively, undergo the Cross in the same manner; and by that means receive the Honour, Applauses, and Respect of a Saint, during my Life.

My Servants, *Philothea*, reply'd our Lord, never sought after Honour

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nour, Favour, or Praise ; no, *Philothea*, they steadily pursued their way, guided by their Love of me, who was their only object, and encouraged by the assured hopes of attaining the end of their desires ; if the World Extoll'd their stedfast zeal, and love of *Me*, their *Praises* were things indifferent to 'em, since they cou'd not contribute to their happiness. Those who love with sincerity expect no other recompense for their suffering, but the acquisition of their beloved object.

'Tis true, *Philothea*, that Virtue is generally prais'd, and the most wicked cannot deny it their Esteem ; tho' 'tis evident they know not what they mean, since they condemn those who embrace it, and persecute, every where, the professors of Truth. But my Servants undergo their Cross of Contempt, Ignominy, and Persecution without being moved ; for, the love of Heaven having gain'd the absolute mastery, and ascendent over their hearts, they pass over those difficulties without

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without trouble ; and the same reason makes them be unconcern'd at the praises of pious, and well disposed Persons. They see Eternal Happiness before them, they are convinc'd that it is preferable to all other things, and infinitely Amiable, and they are assur'd of attaining it, if they love it heartily.

'Tis thy want of a just apprehension of future Happiness, *Philothea*, which leads thee into most gross, and sensible Errors ; thou takest thy measures of sanctity from an out-side appearance ; and the Praises, Encouragements, and Veneration that are paid to holy Persons, are, or ought to be Motives for thee to carry thy Cross. But, know, *Philothea*, that My Servants stand not in need of *Applauses* ; and know moreover, that the best way to praise them, is to imitate their Lives and Virtues ; and the Praises that are given them, tends to no other purpose then to excite, and encourage others to become Virtuous by their Example.

Those

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Those who court worldly Favour, and Honours, by attempting hazardous enterprizes, and exposing themselves to manifest dangers; reap the fruit of their labour, when they've acquired their proposed Honours, since they are the end at which their endeavours aim'd. If thou, *Philothea*, undergo'st the burthen of the Cross, that is, suffer'st thy self to be calumniated, despised, ignominiously treated, and persecuted in this World by the malice of thy Enemies, to the end that some may Publish thy Heroick Constancy, and wonderful Temper, in the midst of thy great Afflictions; what other reeompense can'st thou expect, but those Praises which were the *but* and *scope* of thy desire? My Servants, *Philothea*, despise both the Flatteries, and reproaches of the World; their whole desires, and hearts are placed in Heaven, and Heaven will be the reward of their desires.

Thy pretence, *Philothea*, of having thy Cross without Ignominy,
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appearing to be very Foolish, and a manifest contradiction in it self; thy Fifth Article, (that it may be Glorious and Transparent to the end it may be seen from a great distance of) will be also found to be no less full of Vanity, and Folly. What pretend'st thou from hence, *Philothea*? That the World shou'd Honour thee? Thou hast already seen the Vanity of that pretence. But what, *Philothea*, do'st thou pretend to? My Lord, said she, I pretend only that others shou'd follow Me; to the end the number of your Servants may be encreas'd.

At length, *Philothea*, 'tis evident, reply'd our Saviour, that thou cover'st thy Vanity with My Cross, and under it conceal'st thy Pride. Thou hast not yet begun to follow Me, and already desirest than others may follow thee? thou hast not yet begun to learn, and set'st thou up for a teacher of others? Thou hast not yet laid the Cross on thy shoulders, and already pretend'st thou to have Adorers of thy Cross? Thou'rt not yet become

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a Disciple of *My Cross*, and wou'dst already be esteem'd a Mistress with *thine*? Thou *teachest Philothea*, before thou hast learnt.

Thou hast acquired no Virtue, and pretend'st to Applauses. Dost use dissimulation with Me? Peradventure don't I see thy true intention, or don't I penetrate thy most secret thoughts? Wou'dst thou persuade Me that thy real thoughts are to encrease the number of My Disciples by becoming a Mistress? Before thou art profess't My Disciple, nay before thou hast enter'd My School, pretendest thou to set Rules to others? Thy Vanity, *Philothea*, prompts thee neither to serve nor follow Me; but to have others serve, and follow thee; thou aim'st to be applauded, but not to have Me Honour'd.

And what, vain and Foolish *Philothea*, will't thou teach, but Vanity, and Folly? With a Proud, and Glorious Cross, pretend'st thou to teach Humility? With a Cross of *Diamonds*, wilt

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wilt thou teach *Poverty*? with a Cross of Gold wilt thou teach thy followers to despise *Riches*? And wou'dst thou Triumph before thy Victory? Pride and Vanity are Mortal Enemies to thy Happiness; they are the effects of a misplaced Affection; let Me have thy whole heart, if thou wilt Triumph for ever.

In the present disposition of thy Soul, thou'lt teach a most lively Hypocrisy; Sin, and corruption, cloak'd with an appearance of sanctity. Thou'lt instruct thy followers, seemingly to love *Me*; but, in effect, to love Vanity, and Ostentation. Thou'lt bid them suffer their Afflictions with a pretended love of Me, but in reality with a design to be prais'd, to be respected, and to be Honour'd by others; and, what's worst, *Philothea*, thou'lt teach them such a Master-piece of Dissimulation, as will turn to thine and their utter and Eternal Confusion.

The Cross, *Philothea*, which My Servants, and Disciples carry, is not

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a specious Sanctity, but a sincere Humility, and real Poverty in Spirit. It is not encomiums, and applauses they regard, but a true content in mind, and a solid Joy to behold Eternal Felicities prepared as a reward for their unfeign'd, and perfect *love of Me.* Neither is it the loss of Friends, Relations, Health, Estate, your very lives, or what else is dear to you, and incident to Mankind; no, *Philothea*, these common calamities, are not *My Cross*, unless they are suffer'd for *love of Me*; but the overcoming your corrupt nature, your unlawful and inordinate affections to the World, and subjecting them to the principles of solid Reason, which teaches you to chuse your greatest good, preferrably to all other things. That endless Happiness is undoubtedly your greatest Good, and therefore ought earnestly to be desired during your whole Life-time; the several ways made use of by my Servants to gain this victory over their depraved Inclinations, and preserving

Chappel of the Cross. 265

serving their Reason in its full vigour and power to conduct the whole Man, agreeably, yet strongly, to an end most connatural to his Being, (the utmost Glory, and Felicity of which 'tis capable) is the Cross which my Servants bear.

C H A P. XXX.

Our Lord shews Philothea, how vain her Arguments are, against daily carrying the Cross.

LAstly, *Philothea*, said our Saviour continuing his Discourse, thou desirest permission, not to carry thy Cross *daily*; but to have some intermitting days of respite allow'd thee: from which sufficiently appears that thy true meaning is, that thy Cross shou'd be of short continuance. Tell me, abused and pretended follower of the Cross, tell me, if to day thou bearest thy Cross, and to morrow layest it aside how wilt thou resume it the next? Who will take it
N up?

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up? Not thou, *Philothea*; for by granting thy depraved inclinations, one days liberty to withdraw themselves, from their obedience and subjection to thy Reason, thou wilt want power to reclaim 'em the next. The more indulgence thou grantest thy irregular Passions, the more headstrong they grow; and thy Reason becomes *less able* to govern 'em. The daily ordering thy actions to the attaining thy chief good, strengthens thee to continue so doing; and if thou art once enabled to carry thy Cross, (or govern thy actions orderly towards gaining Heaven) and then lay'st it down, how wilt thou be able to carry it, when thou hast lost part of thy vigour? Why wilt thou take that up to morrow, which thou hast laid aside to day? Will that which thou quitt'st to day, because troublesome and weighty, be taken up to morrow as a thing light, and easy? If by overcoming thy self to day, thou art better able to conquer thy self to morrow, and if one Victory is a step to another, 'tis plain
that

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that thy being overcome to day, facilitates thy being overcome the next ; and that, if thou lay'st aside the Crofs to day, thou'lt not take it up to morrow.

But, thou wilt say, that I'll enable thee to retake thy Crofs ; and who, ill-advised *Philothea*, told thee, that I wou'd do thee that Grace and Favour ? Who told thee, light and inconstant Woman, that when thou abandon'st thy own True Interest, I shall continue my repeated Favors ; and not rather abandon thee to the consequence of being govern'd by thy several Appetites and Passions ? Who told thee, that I shou'd always have such a careful eye over thy sinful courses, as to lay effectual means of thy Conversion and return to thy duty, if, by forsaking the Crofs, thou also forsak'st me ; who, I say, has assured thee of my Assistance, or of any Favour from *Me* ? *Me*, I say, whom thou hast ingratefully cast off, whose kindness thou hast slighted, and for whom thou hast conceiv'd an aversion ? For what Merits of

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thine ?

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thine? What Obligations from thee?
Or what advantage will arise to Me
from thy being eternally Happy, or
displeasure from thy being for ever
Miserable? Besides, dost thou expect
to have thy Ingratitude, and Crimes
rewarded with my Favours and
Bounty?

And art thou ignorant, *Philothea*,
that when I said, whosoever will fol-
low me, and be my Disciple, must
daily take up his Cross and follow me?
Si quis vult venire post me, tollat cru-
cem suam, & sequatur me, I meant to
except thee.

I bid my Disciples *daily* take up
their Cross, and follow me; and
thou wou'dst *daily* lay it down and
follow me?

Observe, *Philothea*, the changea-
bleness and levity of thy Nature;
thou first desired'st me to make thee
a *new* way to follow me, *without* a
Cross; afterward, thou agreed'st to
take it up, and, now, thou beg'st leave
to *lay it aside*.

I commanded my Disciples to fol-
low me *daily* with a Cross, and thou
en-

Chappel of the Cross. 269

endeavour'st to withdraw thy self from it. Thou seem'st willing to follow me, but, in effect, thou proposest to *shun* me. I have declar'd to thee, thy Greatest Good is in *Heaven*; thou seekest for it in the Pleasures of the World. I tell thee, that by ordering the actions of thy Life to gain thy Supreme Felicity, is the way to Heaven; but thou wou'd'st so order thy life, as to enjoy the present. Who but thou, *Philothea*, wou'd nourish an imagination so far from reason and discretion?

I, my Lord, said *Philothea*, discourse like a weak and ignorant Woman; but you are Infinitely Wise. 'Tis *Just*, I confess, that we shou'd daily follow you, but what is Just, ought also to be possible. *Every day* a Cross, my Lord? *every day*, and never be without it? Must I every day carry my Cross? My Cross whilst I sleep? My Cross whilst I eat? My Cross when I rise? My Cross when I lie down? My Cross when I speak? My Cross whilst I live? and my Cross when I die?

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Who is able to bear, who can away with such a perpetual Cross?

Who can away, *Philosbea*, reply'd our Lord, who can away with such a perpetual Cross? Millions, with the Assistance of my Grace, and none without it, or of himself. Who can away with my Cross, say'st thou? Millions of aged Saints, who serve me in the Secular and Regular Clergy; Millions of young Men who profess religious Lives; Millions of young and antient Women, who with vigour and courage daily bear their Cross; and Millions of secular Persons, as well Old as Young, who love me preferrably to all worldly pleasure, in the joyful expectation of the Eternal Happiness which I've prepared for those who do so.

My Infinite Goodness which made me become Man to preach Salvation to the World; My Doctrine confirm'd with innumerable Miracles, the perpetual Crosses that travers'd my whole Life, were such convincing proofs of my Love to Mankind, and of my earnest desire to render them
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Chappel of the Cross. 271

pleatly happy, have been means whereby infinite numbers of Souls have been induc'd to abandon all and follow me. The lively sense of so great Mercy, such Grace and Favour as I express'd to Mankind, has wrought so powerfully upon Multitudes of Souls, as to make them undergo amazing difficulties for my sake with a most invincible Courage; to sacrifice the *whole* repose of their lives, and through a Sea of their own *Blood* poured out in most cruel Torments, arrive at Eternal Happiness. And thou, *Philothea*, standst immovable, as a Rock, against all the assaults of my Tenderness and Clemency, against the inviting Examples of Millions of happy Souls who now reign with Me, and against the pressing Motives of thy Interest, which loudly calls upon thee to take up thy Cross and follow me, through the Troubles of this Life, to the enjoyment of Everlasting Pleasures. From what I've said, thou may'st plainly see, how my Cross and Sufferings, communicate an unconceiv-

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able virtue to all those who bear it for my sake: 'Tis also evident how the courage with which I supported innumerable Miseries, has strengthen'd others to do the like for love of Me; and now 'tis manifest that the love of Me, which is derived from the Doctrine which I taught with infinite pains, and confirm'd with my Death and Passion, for the Redemption of the World, enables the faithful, cheerfully to bear their Crosses here, most assuredly expecting to be for ever happy hereafter.

Thou art mistaken, therefore, to believe that my Cross is *heavy*, and the carrying of it *painful* to those who *love* me; for the ardour of their affection not only makes it light, but pleasant; and 'tis burthensom to none but those whose hearts are too strongly bent upon the Delights of this World.

Behold, *Philothea*, with what satisfaction they bear their Cross, who have absolutely disengaged their affections from the deluding Pleasures of the Earth? They are convinc'd
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Chappel of the Cross. 273

of the truth which I Preach'd, and therefore love Me tenderly, with a perfect resignation to my will, and entire confidence in the performance of what I promis'd. Behold how clear 'tis that they take Delight in their Cross, and their satisfaction is more or less, in proportion to their love. The Religious Person contentedly pursuing his way to Heaven, by the strict observance of those rules to which he has engaged himself, renders his Cross Easy to him. The devout secular Priest by living in the World to instruct others, how to do so, and, at the same time, preserve their affections entire from worldly engagements, pursues his way to Heaven chearfully, and with pleasure overcomes the difficulties which his corrupt nature, and the World together, oppose to his Felicity. Having always, present to him, a clear and convincing Judgment, that the Happiness which his Soul requires is only to be found in the enjoyment of her Creator, he bends his whole endeavours to perfect himself and

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others for that happy union. And consider, *Philothea*, whether these, and such like Pious Souls, are able or not to carry their Cross *daily*, since, by doing so, they daily increase their strength and satisfaction.

The perfect Obedience which I always paid to the will of My Eternal Father, even to the Death of the Cross, is an Example of conformity and submission to those Crosses and Troubles which accompany humane life ; and My Servants availing themselves of it, suffer, with an entire resignation, for My Sake, those Ills and Miseries to which Mankind (thro' *Adams* first prevarication) is become Subject, and which are Vexatious, and Tormenting to others.

From hence is evident the advantage which My Servants have over those who are not so ; for the ills which daily happen are *Painful*, and *Afflicting* to such as have no share in My Favour, and *ease* to My Servants. Worldlings, with Grief, Trouble and Anguish, undergo their Misfortunes ; and My Servants with Joy undergo the
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Chappel of the Cross. 275

the necessity of cross events, and from the true Value of that unchangeable Happiness which they with a just confidence propose to themselves hereafter, and from that knowledge, derive fresh Courage to pursue that good which they daily find to be more amiable than others. Thus, *Philothea*, My Servants convert their *daily Crosses*, into *daily Blessings*, whilst others with regret daily suffer theirs, but to their utter confusion.

C H A P. XXXI.

Philothea argues against carrying the Cross, and pleads in behalf of Lawful Pleasures, affirming it impossible that they shou'd be a Cross.

MY Lord, said *Philothea*, you have overcome, I yield to so much reason; I've no longer any power to resist, lay what Cross you please upon Me, O Eternal Good; but I humbly beseech you to enlighten my understanding, and explain to

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to me why my Cross must not be made after my own fashion, but after yours: Since 'tis you who said, let every own take up his *own* Cross, and follow Me, *tollat crucem suam*. If every one must take up his *own* Cross, 'tis plain that he must not take *yours*, and if his *own* 'tis not *yours*, but *his*, and fashion'd to his *own* liking; so that I did not ask amiss, when I desired to have my Cross fashion'd to my pleasure, to the end I might follow you with it more chearfully.

And, again, how is't possible that there shou'd be a Cross in Pleasures, and in the ordinary actions of our life; and what's more, that you shou'd esteem it *yours*? For if pleasure is a Cross, 'tis a delightful one; and in such a way, none will refuse to follow you; 'tis that which my heart desires for me, and others like my self, and which yet you have refused, and reprimanded me for asking it.

I'm not sorry, *Philothea*, reply'd our Saviour, to find you more submissive,

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missive, and resign'd to my will; give ear then, and be still resign'd to those truths I'm going to communicate to thee: by which means, thy doubts will be satisfy'd, thy understanding enlighten'd, and thy timorous will enflamed with a desire to obey me.

Whoever will follow *Me*, that is, my Doctrine, and Example, must necessarily carry his Cross, or (which is the same thing) must overcome his corrupt nature, and reduce it to terms of being govern'd by principles of unprejudiced Reason, which teaches him to love his greatest good, and order all his actions to attain it. Since therefore, the pleasures of the World are apt to alienate your heart from it, and draw it to themselves, Reason tells you that they are Enemies to your true felicity, and, upon that account, to be carefully avoided; and, since your Proud, Vain, and Sensual Inclinations are no less obstacles to your Happiness, they also must be treated like Foes to your E-

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ternal welfare. This conquest over your depraved nature, and this Victory over the World, is the Cross which you, *Philothea*, and every one of My followers *must* carry.

And, tell Me, how wou'd you accomodate your Cross to your particular fancy? Or what means can you invent to fashion your Cross any otherwise than the nature of the thing will allow? Can you bestow your heart upon *future Happiness*, and at the same time, passionately love the pleasures of *this World*? Can you Vanquish the Corruption of your nature by Indulgence, and abandoning your self wholly to it? Will Reason ever be Mistress of thy actions whilst Pride, Vanity, Passion, and Folly have the entire Government of them? And canst thou pretend to be made partaker of Eternal Beatitude, and reign with Me for ever, who hast devoted thy self to the enjoyment of perishable Delights, and prefer'd the present satisfaction of thy unjust desires, to what thy un-
prejudiced

Chappel of the Cross. 279

prejudiced Reason, thy true Interest,
and I My self advise thee ?

Go, Slave as thou art to thy passions, go *Philothea*, true Daughter of disobedient *Eve*; go and entertain thy self with those pleasures, in which thou takest so great delight ; never Trouble thy self about so slight a thing as *Heaven*, but pass thy days in the enjoyment of those worldly felicities, of which thou art so extreamly fond ; never Cross thy Inclinations, of what nature soever they be ; never check thy Appetite, nor set any bounds to thy dear liberty, but follow the stream of thy unlimited desires. Think not how all this will terminate, or that thy days on Earth will have an end ; this thought, *Philothea*, wou'd afflict thee, wou'd strike a damp upon thy Spirits in the midst of all thy jollity and pleasures, and be an insupportable Cross to thee ; admit not the least reflexion on thy future state ; such an imagination wou'd interrupt thy Mirth with Sadness and Melancholy, thou wou'dst be disquieted at the troublesome thought of carrying

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carrying thy Affections which thou hast got in this World with thee, when thou hast left it for ever. It was too Grievous, too Tormenting even *here*, to want thy beloved pleasures for the short space of thy life ; how deplorable then will thy condition be, when thou shalt Eternally love those once pleasing objects, which thou shalt eternally be without, and eternally desire? Why shou'd I afflict thee with the knowledg that, tho' thou cann'st not forgo loving this World with thy wonted affection, tho' twill no longer have its accustom'd charms, nay 'twill appear loathsome and detestable, yet, such is thy unchangeable state, thou must necessarily carry this Cross *for ever?*

Philothea, became speechless, and almost stupified at this discourse ; and wou'd have seem'd to be without life, if some tears which fell from her Eyes had not manifested the contrary.

Lay down at length, pursued our Saviour after a little pause, thy unreasonable pretensions to have a Cross
fra-

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framed to thy fantastick liking, and see the contradiction that lies in thy demand. Thy Humour, *Philothea*, which is a passion bred in thy inferior Appetite, and opposite to Reason, is the very evil that must be rooted out ; the doing of which for My Sake, is the Cross which thou art to carry ; how then is it possible to lead a life *according to* thy humour, when 'tis thy business to endeavour its utter *subversion* ?

Neither will it cease to be *thy* Cross, tho' tis not fashion'd agreeably to thy humour ; for thy Reason being convinced that she must be for ever miserable, if she persists to Gratify her appetite in its unjust demands, which are altogether corporeal, and aim no higher than *Sensitive* objects, (which is an employment unworthy a *Spiritual* being, and very unsuitable to an Immortal substance) finds a necessity to obey My Commands, and put a stop to so dangerous a career as her humourfom Appetite wou'd run, if left to its liberty. This Cross, therefore is doubly *thine*, because
fashion'd

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fashion'd by thy Reason, and imposed by her upon thy sensitive nature.

C H A P. XXXII.

Philothea rightly apprehends our Saviours Doctrine, and the reason why she ought not to have a Cross, according to her humour : She asks why Crosses are not equally distributed amongst His Servants.

P*hilothea*, being in a little time recover'd out of her Trouble, made this reply. Now, My Lord I understand the meaning of those Words *Crucem suam*, his own Cross ; to be far different from my former apprehension. I see, the necessity for every one to carry his own Cross is as indispensable, as the perversity of every mans nature to be overcome is requisite ; the doing which is a Cross peculiar to every Soul. I moreover see, that to attempt a thing upon Humour and Fancy, is to bid
defi-

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defiance to Reason, which ought to govern the whole Man ; that unprejudic'd Reason, acts nothing but what is best; and that your Commands, are such rules to live by, as Man himself wou'd make choice of, if his Reason were not byass'd by Passion, and the depravedness of his Sensitive being ; and, lastly, I see, that the Cross which you command us to carry, is not a burthen *arbitrarily* imposed upon Mankind, but a necessary check to render our Corporeal Nature obedient to Reason, and consequently to your Commands.

But, my Lord, give me leave to ask, how it comes to pass, in this Christian warfare, that crosses are so *unequally* distributed? Why some have *great* Crosses, and others *little* ones? Why all are not either great or little? Why they are not all carried after the same fashion? And why you are not pleas'd to make 'em Equal since you are not an Acceptor of Persons?

If

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If you'll take the pains, *Philorhea*, reply'd our Saviour, to reflect on what you've just now said, you'll there find an answer to your several Queries. You acknowledg that it imports every one to carry his Cross, and overcome the perversity of his Nature, which truly implies that there are *degrees* of depravedness, in each Person, which are to be master'd; whence it comes to pass, that some carry *greater* Crosses than others, that is, meet with greater difficulties and opposition in themselves to be conquer'd than others do; and this you call an *unequal* distribution, which is rather *most equal*, since proportion'd to the necessities of every one. The reason why they are not carry'd on the same fashion, is, because all Persons take not the same methods to vanquish the Obstacles that interpose themselves; in which, the variety of circumstances creates an infinite diversity in the proper means to complete their victory.

You've lately confess'd, that my Commands, are no other than Principles

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ciples of Unprejudiced Reason, by which the Soul may guide her self in the way to Heaven, without danger of erring ; in this sense you are said to carry my Cross, and, thus, it is imposed upon you by my Will : But, in reality, it is what your own Reason, when calm, sedate, and undisturbed by Passion, sees to be necessary for her Good, and therefore made choice of by her, as the only proper means to attain Salvation ; and she makes the application of it to her self after several ways, according to the several emergencies that arise, and to what she finds expedient.

But my Lord, said *Philothea*, is it not true that the World subsists, and is govern'd according to your Infinite Wisdom, by a long Chain of Causes laid from all Eternity ; and that nothing is transacted in the World without your Divine Influence ? So that if we prefer one way of subduing our vitiated Nature, to another, as most proper for our present circumstances, *that*, too is an effect

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effect of your boundless power; and, therefore, as the Crosses themselves are your Commands, so the Distribution of them is your Act, or the Order of Causes so disposed by you as is fit to guide our reason to the choice of what is best.

You say right, *Philotea*, reply'd our Lord, that in some measure those actions may pass under my name, which immediatly proceed from your own choice; so that, although your choice is determin'd in virtue of those means prepared by *Me*, yet 'tis *your own act*, and the distribution of Crosses is either caus'd by what every one judges to be most proper for himself in respective circumstances, or the effect of some friendly advice, to whose conduct he has entirely deliver'd himself, and pays to it a blind obedience. The Partition, therefore of Crosses, and the manner of carrying must needs be as various, as the variety of several circumstances.

Sometimes the Soul is so evidently convinc'd that none but GOD ought

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ought to be the object of her Desires (because in him all possible happiness is treasured up, and she was made to enjoy that Happiness) that she with pleasure is carried on to the contemplation of her future blissful State ; which raises her desires of it to such a pitch, as the struggles of her Body against this are too faint, and the resistance, which the World opposes to her endeavours, are too feeble to hinder her pursuit of Heaven.

Of this number, are many Ecclesiasticks both Secular and Religious ; many who lead retired lives , and many Lay Persons, who in the midst of secular Affairs, live disengaged from them ; who live in the World, untouch'd with its Impurities ; who live environ'd on all sides with Vanity, yet are not tainted with it ; and like the Children in the burning Furnace, feel not those contagious Heats which corrupt the rest of Mankind. And these devout Souls, who, by strengthening their knowledg of Heaven, with that vigour which evident

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dent certainty carries along with it, lay a Foundation of such principles for action, as steadily keeps within their view the boundless Happiness for which they were created ; which makes 'em eagerly press forwards by such acts of love, as the Body has not Power to withstand. These Crosses, *Philothea*, are render'd *light*, by the Ardour of their Affections brighten'd by the force of Reason assisted with My Holy Spirit.

There are others whom the *passions* of love, or fear, bring into the number of My followers. A Sensible and lively representation of the pleasures in Heaven frequently repeated to Christians from their most early years, agreeably insinuates it self into their imagination ; the History of My Death and Passion for their sakes, often inculcated to them with a *passionate love* of Heaven, and of *Me* : The terrors of Eternal Misery represented in lively colours, rouse many out of their sinful lethargy, and *fright* them into the thoughts of Heaven, and doing something

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thing to prevent that last misfortune, of which they retain most dreadful *Ideas*. Those who are actuated by these passions, move in a different orb from those of whom I spoke before; for the actions of one are rooted in *Sensation*, of the other, in *Knowledge*; one moves by the impulse of *Fancy*, the other by the force of *Clearest Evidence*; one is *Spiritual*, the other, *Sensitive*. But both the one and the other move to the same *End*, tho' they carry their *Cross* after different fashions; the *Sensitive* way is the most general, because impressions are easiest made upon Mankind thro' their *senses*; and, for the most part, it is the properest, and best Method, because aptest to work upon the *Mind*. The difficulties that *Christians* meet withal in this *Sensitive* way, are caus'd by the *Unevenness* of the *Corporeal* temper, by which they are oftner disposed to receive the impressions of *Vanity* and *Sin*, than those of *Virtue*; but *Habits*, having the force of *Nature*,
O My

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My Servants, by Fasting, Praying, and Mortification of the Body, at length overcome the ill propension of it, and breed in it an Habitual disposition to acts of Piety and Virtue. The performance of this, is laborious, and toilsome, and renders their Cross *heavy*; but, at the same time, they are encouraged to continue their endeavours by a passionate affection to Me, which *sweetens* their labour, and daily *strengthens* it self, by a continu'd Victory over their Corrupt Inclinations.

There are others, *Philothea*, who, being entangled in worldly affairs, have yet the Happiness to make a Virtue of Necessity, by converting their Pains, and Labour, in worldly Employments, into acts of Merit, by making them instruments to improve their Love of Me.

By this means, the Day-labourer who undergo's the hardships of excessive Heats, and Colds, Poverty, and

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and Distress, may cultivate in himself an extraordinary Charity; if the love of *Me* makes him suffer these difficulties with Patience, which the Necessity of getting a lively-hood wou'd otherwise oblige him to endure.

Kings, and Princes, publick Ministers, and Magistrates, Noblemen, the Married, and the Continent, are all exposed to those Troubles which are naturally annex'd to their several States and Professions. If Kings with Courage, Wisdom, Piety, and Goodness, support the fatigue and anxiety which the due Government of their Subjects will draw upon them; If the Ministers, and Magistrates, execute their respective Trusts, with fidelity, grounded upon, and carry'd on by a real Charity to God, and their Neighbour; if the Noblemen, by Examples of their own Virtue, make their Rank in the World truly Eminent and Advantageous to others; and if the Married, and Continent

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suffer the difficulties of their States with a resignation actuated by *My Love*; they convert their necessary Troubles, and which are inseparable from their several stations, into Croffes, that will fit and prepare them for Eternal Happiness. And, what's more, their very Recreations and Diversifements, are accompanied with the same Spirit; their Refreshments in Eating, Drinking, and Sleeping (when order'd for the necessary support of nature, and the better enabling them to follow Me) are Vocations which concur extreamly to the **Happy Consummation** of rheir Lives.

And, perhaps, *Philorhea*, you'll be surpris'd to know, that 'tis very possible, that a Servant of mine (who leads a quiet, regular, and duly order'd Life towards the attaining his Ultimate Good, may be in a much greater State of perfection than one who employs himself in Severities, Mortifications, and Painful Exercises; for, since the measure of perfection

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fection is taken from the greatness of Charity, it may fall out very easily, that one whose life is well order'd in the Contemplation of Heaven, may have rais'd his desires of it to a higher Pitch, than he who Toils, and Torments his Body that he may reduce it to Terms of Obedience.

The want of this Regular Government of humane life, is the cause why many Souls lose innumerable happy junctures, and favourable occasions of an easy improvement of their time to the gaining Eternal Felicity. For, shou'd Christians, thro' their Love of *Me*, Patiently suffer the many Crosses that are incident to them in their several conditions; they wou'd Establish in themselves a Foundation of Sanctity, on which they might safely raise their hopes and desires to that everlasting Crown, with which I've promis'd to recompense a Faithful Perseverance. But, not regarding those infinitely valuable opportunities of improving their

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Charity, and not fixing in their hearts the Memory of God, their kind Redeemer; they unprofitably consume the irremediable Moments of their Life; and deplore the loss, when 'tis too late to be redeem'd.

There are others who labour under the difficulties of Persecution, Affronts, Calumnies, and Sickness, and many other penal hardships, which are very afflicting to My Servants; these Crosses, (which befall them, as Trials of their Virtue) they bear for My sake with a firmness of Mind, that wonderfully heightens their Love of Me, and brings them Consolation in the midst of their Sorrows.

There are other Crosses of a more Spiritual nature; as, when the Soul is strongly bent with a desire to contemplate, and applies her utmost art and force to rouse such Fantasms as may second her desires, and create a Sensible affection to the Subject of
her

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her Meditation ; but cannot compass her design, and, with regret finds her thoughts Dry and Insipid. This *Philothea*, is a Cross that deeply Afflicts and Troubles some Pious Souls, thro' the abundance of their affection to Me ; which is so far from being lessen'd by their ill success, that in time they feel it redoubled in their hearts, to their inexpressible comfort and satisfaction.

Another degree of this Spiritual Cross, is when the Soul, by long Contemplation, having made the Body union and Perfectly agreeable to her self, they are both as 'twere, on Fire, with Love of Me ; which makes them sigh, and pant, and consume themselves, in the extremity of Pain, with a longing desire to be dissolved, that their utmost or final union to Me may succeed, and be entirely compleated.

In Fine, *Philothea*, Crosses without number, are distributed, infinite
seve-

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several ways, amongst My Servants; answerably to *My intention*, and *their good*, which is to bring them to be partakers of Eternal Bliss, by Supernatural means, working connaturally upon them. This amazing Mystery of My Providence will then lie open to their view, and surprise them with a pleasing Astonishment, when they behold, (without the help of Fancy or beating their Brain to find out the connexion of things) the whole Design of Nature, and that Infinite Wildom who contrived it after so wonderful a manner; when they see themselves rais'd from nothing into a Body of Dirt, and Clay, animated with an Immortal Being, to be the Scope and End of this prodigious World ordain'd for their delightful entertainment, 'till they shou'd be ripen'd for the enjoyment of infinitely greater Felicities, and of Eternal continuance; and when they behold *all* Nature (of which they are the principal part) brought to its determined *Period* thro'

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an infinite variety of causes inseparably link'd together; and themselves, after those temporal crosses which they suffer'd in their life-time, at repose in the happy enjoyment of their Creator, whose infinite Wisdom order'd each circumstance that conduced to so much Bliss; then, then, *Philothea*, transported with unexpressible Joy and Satisfaction they'll sing for ever, *Alleluia*, let us praise our Omnipotent God, because he reigns over us; let us rejoyce, and Glorify God because the Nuptials of the Lamb are approached, who redeem'd us with his Blood, and is worthy of all Power, Divinity, Wisdom, Fortitude, Honour, Glory, and Benediction, to all Eternity. Amen.

The end of the first Book.

E R R A T A.

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